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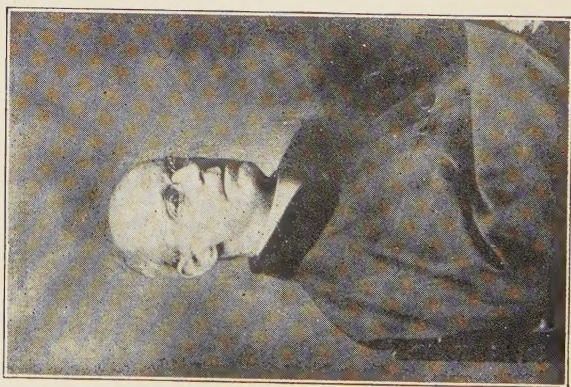
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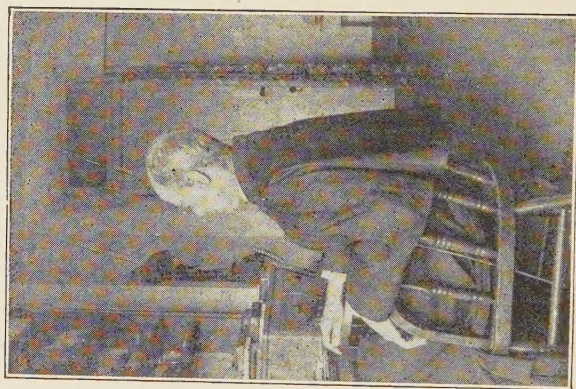




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FATHER TABB

# FATHER TABB

A STUDY OF HIS LIFE AND WORKS

WITH

UNCOLLECTED AND UNPUBLISHED POEMS

BY

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BALTIMORE

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## PREFACE

This volume has grown out of a brief autobiography given to me by Father Tabb while I was a student at St. Charles' College and a lecture I delivered there in January, 1916. It represents the fulfillment of an ambition to write as complete an account of the life of the most reticent of American poets as the material available would allow as well as to correct the many unfounded and inaccurate statements current about him.

My personal knowledge of the poet and my acquaintance with most of his intimate friends, together with the possession and exclusive control of important documents and manuscripts, have afforded me advantages denied to those who have preceded me in making Father Tabb better known.

I have tried to present Father Tabb in such a way as to appeal to all and yet to satisfy the most rigorous demands for accuracy and truth. In order not to defeat the first aim and to meet the second, I have collected all the proofs of my assertions and other critical references into a separate appendix and have indicated in the text the particular number of the accompanying note.

If the termination of my research has been successful, my success is due in large measure to the generous assistance and loyal co-operation of the priest-poet's friends and admirers. Among those to whom I am greatly indebted it is a pleasure to record the following:

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## PREFACE

Miss Lucy H. Browne, the daughter of Professor William Hand Browne, who permitted me unrestricted and exclusive use of the largest collection of *Tabbiana extant*.

Rev. Daniel J. Connor, rector of St. Luke's Church, Jersey Shore, Pa., from whose manuscript I obtained a large number of unpublished poems.

Rev. Edward R. Dyer, president of St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, whose collection of cartoons is unequalled, and whose support in many ways has made this book possible.

Rev. Charles D. Hogue, president of St. Charles' College, Catonsville, Md., whose keen observations helped considerably in the analysis of the poet's personality.

Rev. Joseph A. Garvey and Joseph A. Cunnane, who brought to my attention what I believe to be the earliest of Father Tabb's poems.

Professors James W. Bright and John C. French, of the Hopkins, who have given much helpful advice and kindly criticism.

Mr. Henry L. Litz, my father, who has given his individual attention to the printing of this book.

Acknowledgment is also due the following publishers: Small, Maynard, and Company, for all poems marked P. (*Poems*) and L. (*Lyrics*); Mitchell Kennerly, for *Later Poems*; Benziger Brothers, for *Bone Rules*; the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *Bookman*, the *Century*, the *Cosmopolitan*, *Harper's Weekly* and *Monthly*, the *Independent*, *Lippincott's*, *Scribner's*, and the *American Magazine*, the *Youth's Companion*, and the *Sunday School Times*, for the uncollected poems.

FRANCIS A. LITZ.

The Johns Hopkins University,  
July 1, 1923.

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## CHAPTER I

### BIRTH AND BOYHOOD

John Banister<sup>1</sup> Tabb, the greatest of American epigrammatists, was born at "The Forest," the family estate at Mattoax, in Amelia County, near Richmond, Virginia, on March 22, 1845. His father, Thomas Yelverton Tabb, was a direct descendant of Humphrey Tabb, an Englishman, who came to Elizabeth City County, Virginia, as early as 1637, and who was elected one of its justices fifteen years later. His only son Thomas, who was for many years burgess and in 1706 sheriff of Amelia County, fixed the family seat, with an estate of almost two thousand acres, in the same county when he removed his family to Clay Hill. Thomas' great grandson John was burgess for Amelia from 1753 to 1774, and also a member of the Convention of 1774 and of the Colonial Committee of Safety, 1775-1776. John married Frances Peyton, February 17, 1770,<sup>2</sup> and their son John Yelverton married Mary Peachy. From this latter union sprang the poet's father, "a planter of the old type, honest and hospitable, a kind master and a loyal friend."<sup>3</sup>

The poet's mother, Marianna Bertrand Archer, a first cousin<sup>4</sup> to his father, was the daughter of Doctor John R. Archer, who came to Amelia County from Scotland. The latter could not trace his family to any connection with the family of William S. Archer,<sup>5</sup>

that is, to the William S. Archer who distinguished himself in the United States Senate from 1841 to 1847 as the head of the Committee on Foreign Relations.

John Banister was the third child of the four that were born of this marriage. The others were (Hattie) Harriet Peyton, William Barksdale, and Yelverton, who was the youngest. When John came into the world, the Tabbs were one of the richest as well as oldest of the families of Virginia. They could point with pride not only to their ancestors and connections, which included the Washingtons and the Randolphs,<sup>6</sup> but also to themselves as worthy representatives of honored family names. Their estate consisted of several extensive plantations and their slaves were numbered in the hundreds. Their income from these plantations enabled them to live as gentry with traditions. As it was into such surroundings that the poet was born, it is not to be wondered at that until the end of his life he cherished his independence as a sacred inheritance and remained an ardent "unredeemed rebel."<sup>7</sup>

John's childhood was both like and unlike that of other children of his social position in the South.<sup>8</sup> It was similar to theirs in the luxuries and comforts that he had at his command to make life pleasant and enjoyable. Among his cherished possessions he counted a black boy-slave who was at his beck and call, and on whom he played many a prank. The story is told that one day he offered this boy in exchange for a tin soldier which a peddler wanted to sell him. The strong attachment that bound the little master and the little slave endured thruout life and was paralleled by the bond of sympathy that united him with his old

mammy, Jenny Thompson, who nursed him from the first moment of his existence and who never ceased to look out for his welfare so long as he remained at home. Many an hour did he spend in her cabin, always a certain refuge in stormy weather or when he had been punished at home. What marvellous tales, what ancient traditions must he not have heard from her lips to make him wonder-eyed. So grateful was he to her that he always paid her one of his first visits whenever he returned to Amelia for a part of his summer vacation.<sup>9</sup> He recalled her in the poem *Mammy*.<sup>10</sup>

His childhood was unlike that of his playmates inasmuch as he was prevented from full participation in their pleasures by a weak body and weak eyes. The specific condition of his eyes was, according to his boyhood-chum, Dr. Lewis E. Harvie,<sup>11</sup> amaurosis, or the loss of power in the optic nerve without any perceptible change in the eye itself. The weakness of his eyes was felt during his early schooldays, when his mother used "with rare industry and perseverance" to read his lessons to him. The condition of his eyes remained about the same until the third year before his death, when the dimness of his vision began steadily to increase.

Difficult and trying as his mother's task must have been, she was repaid by the whole-souled love of her son, who never forgot her and offered tribute to her in some of his noblest verses.<sup>12</sup> With such a mother the home life of the Tabbs must have been beautiful; frequently in his poetry we happen upon pictures and situations of domestic life that undoubtedly go back ultimately to his own home at "The Forest."<sup>13</sup> So deeply impressed on his mind was the life of peace and joy

on the plantation that after the war he could never think of his home without intense pain. When he heard the news, sometime about 1907, that the last building on the homestead had been destroyed by fire, he actually rejoiced that nothing of all that had been the cause of the greatest pleasure to him remained to distress him.

His education was later entrusted chiefly to a private tutor, Mr. John Lambert Hood,<sup>14</sup> a Yankee, who hailed from Philadelphia and who was an Episcopalian colporter. Mr. Hood had been picked up on the road by Dr. Harvie's father, who got him a place at the Tabb's to teach John and a small class of children from the neighboring estates. It is a matter of no little regret that the knowledge we have of Father Tabb's youth is so meagre and the tales of his doings so few. One<sup>15</sup> has reference to an episode of the class room. When John was thirteen years old, his brother Yelverton eleven, and Lewis Harvie fifteen, they all were studying under Mr. Hood. One day Yelverton caught some of his neighbor Gleen's geese and let them down into a well. He was charged with the deed, but vehemently denied it, although Mr. Gleen as well as Mr. Hood from the school-house window had seen him do it. Mr. Hood told Yelverton that he was a contemptible liar and not a fit associate for other gentlemen's sons. "John got up," Dr. Harvie writes, "the frailest living specimen I ever saw walking about, and stood before Mr. Hood, with his frail hands behind him, and looking his teacher in the eyes, said: 'Mr. Hood, I demand an instant apology to my brother Yelverton for your language. You can chastise him, but you shall not use such language to him in my presence.' Mr. Hood rushed out of the school-house



down the path toward Achor, one of the Tabb plantations, and in about an hour returned with the boys' father, who thought Mr. Hood had gone crazy. Mr. Hood called the school to order, recited the above facts, and apologized most humbly to Yelverton before the school. He then told Mr. Tabb that he felt it his duty to chastise Yelverton severely for his bad conduct and his denial of it." The bold and independent spirit displayed by John in this incident at the age of thirteen remained undaunted to the end.

This same Dr. Harvie is to be credited with some interesting reminiscences of the home life and early years of the poet in a letter to Miss Jennie Tabb.<sup>16</sup>

"The first school I ever attended was 'Cassells' (adjoining 'The Forest'), your dear grandfather and grandmother's home, rendered particularly attractive by their charming personality; we boys were especially attracted to them by daily kindnesses. . . .

"Your uncle Johnny, as we called him, was one of the most joyous, rollicking, loving, and trifling boys I ever went to school with. I don't think he ever studied his lessons a minute, and consequently Mr. Hood had to chastise him frequently. At that period everyone of us hated Mr. Hood, because he was a Yankee and talked through his nose, and we worried him sadly on many occasions—but he was really a noble man, and we all (especially Johnny) admired him very much when he enlisted in our army and died a soldier's death.

"I have seen Mr. Hood whip your Uncle Yelverton, who never whimpered, but when Johnny was whipped, Yelverton yelled louder than he did; the latter said that a licking did not hurt him as much as it did to see his brother punished.

"Your uncle John was by far the most popular boy in the school as well as in the county—always making

fun for the boys and girls and for the older people, too. Especially gifted as a cartoonist, he could draw in a minute a ludicrous likeness of anyone, particularly of my dear father, Dr. Harvie, who was one of his special cronies. I have heard father threaten to box his ears for his impudence—he would get mad as a hornet, and the next instant be convulsed when Johnny would show him a caricature of some other valued friend.”

There was one occasion, nevertheless, on which his bold and self-reliant spirit failed him; but as it was one on which the bravest of the brave falter, he ought not to be indicted for cowardice. Though it may seem strange, John Tabb had a youthful love affair with a daughter of one of his neighbors. A very pretty girl, she captured John’s heart completely; so completely, in fact, that he decided to ask her to marry him. Lack of confidence in himself and the knowledge that he was positively ugly complicated the matter of avowal and proposal. At his wit’s end, he called in the aid of his beloved’s sister (now Mrs. F. R. B., Petersburg, Va.), and asked her to help him by carrying his declaration of love and proposal of marriage by word of mouth to her sister. His request was quite properly refused, although the sister was warned of what she might expect soon to happen. A few days later John found courage enough to propose in person, and felt the keen disappointment of his hopes in the young lady’s refusal of his offer. His sorrow was forgotten, however, in the duties he shortly afterwards imposed upon himself when he enlisted in the Confederate Navy. But I am certain that many of his poems—especially those concerned with purely human love—owe their inspiration in part to the memory of this pretty, genteel maiden of

the Southland who found her way into his heart. My information as to this experience came from the sister of the girl John loved, the one whom he asked to carry his proposal.<sup>17</sup> When I first learned this fact from her, she refused to give me her name, saying that she was "Miss Nobody from Nowhere," and that I must be content with that. Later, in a letter to a common friend, she signed her full name. I quote a sentence from her letter about the silence with respect to the name of her sister. "Father Tabb's old sweetheart might object to being brought before the public. I am sorry I mentioned her name, but I cannot take it back now. Notoriety must be the penalty—though with some compensations—for being loved by a famous poet and genius."

John had a second love affair somewhat later, perhaps between 1865 and 1868. The object of this passion was Miss Mary Ruffin, of Upper Marlburn, Virginia, who was the daughter of the hero of Fort Sumter. His failure to win the cherished one, writes Miss Martha O. Harvie, a sister of Dr. Harvie, "was such a disappointment that we always thought that it accounted for his going into the priesthood." (Of course, such was not the case.) It was this young lady's father, Colonel Frank J. Ruffin, who helped introduce Father Tabb into the enchanted land of poetry by reading him one morning some poems from Wordsworth and Hood.

Dr. Harvie is authority also for the statement that John's musical powers were in evidence during his boyhood. Assisted in his musical studies by "Aunt Judith,"<sup>18</sup> a finished musician, he began the study of the piano very early and progressed rapidly. His interest was so alive, his ear so sensitive, and his mem-

ory so retentive, that if he heard a new opera he could repeat the most striking portions with ease and accuracy. Surely, if more were known of his early life, many passages of his poetry would cease to be obscure and would derive additional value from their biographical import.

John was only sixteen years old when the Civil War plunged the whole nation into four years of bitter strife and untold misery. Soon after the outbreak of hostilities his brothers enlisted in the Confederate army; William, then twenty-two, as captain, and Yelverton, only fourteen, as a private. Mr. Hood, their tutor, also joined the Southern ranks. "There was no braver sixteen year old color-bearer in the Confederate army," according to Dr. Harvie, "than Yelverton Tabb,<sup>19</sup> nor braver adjutant than Lieut. John L. Hood of the 59th Virginia Regiment, Gen. H. A. Wise's brigade." William was subsequently promoted to the rank of colonel<sup>20</sup> and distinguished himself by the qualities of his leadership.

John was as eager as his brothers to serve the cause that was dear to his heart, but he was held back by his weak eyes. Unable to endure the thought of staying at home while his brothers and friends were fighting for his sake, he bided his time, waiting for the very first opportunity to present itself.



## CHAPTER II

### CIVIL WAR EXPERIENCES

I shall let Father Tabb tell his own story of these years of his life. During the autumn of 1908, while I was a student at St. Charles' College, Father Tabb related to me the details of his life that I am now using. I would go to his room on holiday afternoons for half an hour and hear him tell of his family, his experiences during and after the war, the places he had seen, the persons he had met, the friends he had made, and many other details of personal interest. After I left him, I used to go to the study-hall and write as much as I could remember of what he had told me. There was an understanding that I should make use of this material after his death at the proper time. In recording his story I kept the first person in order to retain the autobiographical tone. This record serves me in good stead and is the source of information I can find nowhere else.

"In the second year of the war," he said, "I joined the forces of the South. Major Ficklin, a friend of the family, visited our home and exposed a plan of running the blockade and going to Europe in the interest of the Confederate government.<sup>21</sup> As I was impatient to do my duty, I accepted the opportunity. The next evening I found myself in Wilmington, N. C. Two things about the city impressed me strongly: one was

the great number of buzzards and their tameness; the other was the unusual cleanliness of the streets, especially the market-place, which was due to the presence of the buzzards. We left Wilmington on board *The Kate* and went to Charleston, S. C., making our exit and entrance under cover of darkness. Our party included Major Ficklin, Major Price, Mr. Galliher, Dr. Hardesty, and me. I shall never forget my first night on the ocean. In obedience to the Captain's orders I went to my cabin and slept well for a short time. At midnight I awoke with a start and was for a minute or two bewildered by the awful swish, swish of the waves against the sides of the boat. As soon as I recovered my bearings, I dashed wildly upstairs only to run into the Captain, who peremptorily ordered me below, because we were then in actual danger from the Northern gunboats. I went back to my cabin, but I did not close my eyes during the remainder of the night. On the following morning I saw that all had gone well and that we had successfully run the blockade, but I learned that Major Price was ill with yellow fever. He grew steadily worse. On our fourth day out of Charleston he was taken on deck in order to breathe the bracing salt air. Soon afterwards he asked for a bowl of soup. When it was brought to him, he eagerly drank it; but no sooner had he put the bowl down than he fell back in his armchair dead. Since we hoped to reach San Salvadore by evening, the sailors merely wrapped his body in a tarpaulin and left it on deck. When someone pointed out San Salvadore in the distance, immediately I thought of Columbus gazing upon the island; and as this was the first foreign land I had seen, the idea of the poem entitled *Off San Salvador* flashed thru my mind.<sup>22</sup>

I did not, however, publish it until later in my life. As a matter of fact the first poem I ever published was *The Cloud*.<sup>23</sup> The verses came to me one day while I was walking the streets of Richmond with what could hardly be called shoes on my feet." [Confirmation of the statement that this was the first poem he published is found in a letter printed in *The Bookman*, March, 1899, p. 18.

St. Charles' College,  
Ellicott City, Md.

Dear Sirs:

I should be glad to correct in the *Bookman* what a writer in some other periodical has said, namely, that the Messrs. Harpers, my generous friends, paid me a "pittance" for my poem, "The Cloud," the first I ever sold. Their cheque was a liberal one and relieved me from pressing necessity; so much so that under the lines I have written the following memorandum:

One day with foot upon the ground,  
I stood among the crowd;  
The next, with sole renewed, I found  
A footing on "The Cloud."

Very truly yours,

JOHN B. TABB.

The point of this quatrain is made clear by the following anecdote told by Mr. M. Gordon Hale, who contributed a sketch of Father Tabb's life to the *Bachelor of Arts Magazine* for May, 1896.

After stating that the poem was written in Richmond in the spring of 1877, and that fifteen dollars was paid for it, Mr. Hale quotes a conversation that he had with his friend on the day the check from Harpers arrived.

"'I am walking'" young Tabb remarked, "'on a cloud today.'"

"I replied that I was glad he had such good news."

"Oh, no; not that. I have sold my first poem. I have invested it in a pair of shoes.'" Pp. 798-9.]

"When we arrived at the port, the inspectors, after examining us, said: 'Gentlemen, we cannot allow you to land; you must lie quarantined for a fortnight.' Major Ficklin was further saddened by the news of the death of his wife and daughter. I recall an incident connected with our stay here that seems too horrible and brutal to be true; yet it is a fact. An undertaker came on board our vessel, bringing a coffin for Major Price's corpse, for we had decided to bury him on shore. Our captain offered him a glass of wine. The undertaker, having poured out three fingers, held up his glass, saying calmly: 'To your health, gentlemen. I hope I shall have the pleasure of burying you all.' Think of the gloom and depression that toast brought me.

"After the two weeks had passed we chartered a yacht under Captain Watkins, who was also the owner, a negro, kind and genial, and set sail for Cardenas, which we expected to reach in three days. Crushed by the blow from the death of his wife and child, Major Ficklin fell ill on the first day out, and had to be kept on deck in all the intense heat of the tropical sun. We had no medicine. We had no ice. After the third day we had no provisions. Luckily a negro sailor caught a shark that had been following us for two days, and we ate the meat. It was not until the fifth day, however, that we reached Cardenas. Here it was that I first put my foot on foreign soil. The next morning we sailed for Havana, where we planned to take passage for England. Havana we found to be in the same condition as Salvador and Cardenas: the city was laid



low under diphtheria, yellow fever, and small pox, and many were dying.

"While I was in this city, I first learned of the last rites of the Catholic church. Coolies who were employed by the government had been re-entered into service on this particular day without their knowledge or consent. I felt sorry for those miserable creatures as they filed past me in lock-step. On that same night one of them died on the steps of the Catholic Church and was discovered by the pastor, who administered to him what I afterwards learned was Extreme Unction.

"After a few days we chartered a new steamer and set out for St. Thomas Island. Twelve days were required to make this trip. Altho Major Ficklin had completely recovered from his illness, each and every member of the party, as well as the crew, expected to be stricken at any moment by some disease or other. Our destination reached, I went sight-seeing and observed that the population was very representative of the nations of the earth. I met a negro, I remember, who could speak twelve languages. After a delay of several days we left St. Thomas and in somewhat more than two weeks arrived at Southampton, England. I can never forget the beauty of Southampton as I beheld it from the sea. Never had I seen such a landscape; indeed, I had never dreamed that such a place could exist. It seemed to be a rolling lawn of grass, one magnificent garden as far as the eye could see. Unfortunately, we stayed only one day. Then we went to London, where we remained for five weeks. I made several visits to the World's Fair,<sup>24</sup> which was then in progress. I saw Kean in *King Lear*,<sup>25</sup> my favorite tragedy, the greatest play that Shakespeare, in

my opinion, ever wrote. I also visited Westminster Abbey and the Tower of London. Once, when I was looking at the Crown jewels, I was so frightened by the face and dress of an English colonel that I had to be taken back to our hotel.

"About two weeks after my arrival I became acquainted with a gentleman from Virginia, who invited me to accompany him to Paris for a few days. I was not slow in accepting his invitation. After going by way of Dover and Calais, we spent two days in the gay city, had a few experiences usually encountered by strangers, and returned by way of Boulogne. Two weeks after my return from France we sailed for Glasgow. Here we bought a ship commanded by Captain de Guide, a very nervous man. The ship, shaped like a cigar, was three hundred feet in length and could make eighteen knots an hour. Our cargo consisted of medical necessities and a large supply of paper to be used in making money. We also brought back with us about twenty engravers for the same purpose.

"One day after we had quitted Madeira, we were gathered, I remember, around the dinner table, which was served by two negro waiters. One of them was so odd-looking that I drew a sketch of him and showed it to the other. The caricature caused the latter to laugh so uproariously that he had to withdraw from the room. I passed the sketch round and everyone enjoyed it. On another day during this voyage I remember that I witnessed one of the most ridiculous sights of my life. Among our party were Mr. Blair, a teacher of Latin, and Mr. Price, one of my closest friends, who took Dr. Basil L. Gildersleeve's place in the University of Virginia when the latter accepted

the chair of Greek at Hopkins, and who later was called to Columbia University. Coming out on deck, I saw Blair perched on a chicken coop and lost in reading a book. Creeping up to him, I found that he was reading Homer in the original. I made some remark about the contrast in the situation; tho I have forgotten my words, I shall never forget the ludicrous picture—Homer on a chicken coop. The next leg of our voyage was from Nassau, which we reached about Christmas time, to Bermuda, where we stayed for a day or two, before we started for Charleston. After we arrived in the harbor, we were transferred to another steamer, the famous *Robert E. Lee*.

“Our first really dangerous adventure came when we attempted to run the blockade<sup>26</sup> out of Charleston. Captain Wilkinson,<sup>27</sup> who knew the course, had replaced de Guide, now stationed at the bow of the boat on lookout duty. We were all on edge. Even de Guide, experienced sailor tho he was, often ran to Captain Wilkinson with information of a ship nearby, which, however, always proved a phantom. Suddenly, without warning, our ship struck a sand bar. To add to our peril, we could hear the voices of sailors in our vicinity, and soon discovered that they came from a Federal gunboat. Carefully we lowered a small boat. But Wilkinson first ordered Price to take a brace of pistols below to the engine room and kill the engineers if they refused to obey orders; he then ordered me to fetch two demijohns of Aqua Fortis on deck, so that, if we were unsuccessful in our effort, we could blow up the ship rather than allow it to fall into the hands of the enemy. The men in the small boat dropped an anchor from the stern of the steamer. As soon as the anchor caught at the bottom, we

wound the capstan and thus freed the ship. We cut the rope attached to the anchor, and in less than an hour we were safe from the enemy. How we ever escaped the gunboat is a mystery. The loss of our anchor in after years suggested the poem called *The Lost Anchor*.<sup>28</sup>

"We soon reached Wilmington and remained there a fortnight. One day while walking in a pine forest, I came upon a negro who was engaged in some distilling operation, and asked him what he was doing. 'Makin', he replied, 'sum spirits of turpintude.' It was also in this city that I became acquainted with a gentleman who invited me to his home, a fashionable residence reminding me of what I had left. We had an evening of music which I thoroly enjoyed, during which his daughter and son-in-law sang a beautiful duet from *Romeo and Juliet*. I can still hear them singing, in particular the boy.

"During our stay here a scheme was hatched, rash and imprudent, by Marshall Kane, the man who had refused permission to the Sixth Massachusetts to pass thru Baltimore,<sup>29</sup> and who had later been ostracized by its citizens for his action. His plan was to go to Johnson Island, near Sandusky City, seize the guard and bring back to Richmond at least 1,000 Confederate prisoners.<sup>30</sup> A Jewish lad was sent to the Secretary of War at Richmond, but the latter delayed his information so long that when it was received circumstances were not favorable for the enterprise. Chief of the reasons was the fact that the moon was almost full. Nearly all were against making the attempt at the time and tried to dissuade Kane, but to no purpose. He set the hour for sailing. Among those that sailed were Capt. Dyer, in charge; Capt. de Guide,

whom Dyer hated; Capt. Ball; a newspaper correspondent; a physician; and a man with his wife and child. This family, I recall, became terrified during our trip out of Wilmington, and with reason. While we were running the blockade, I was sitting with Ball on the steps leading to the shell room.

“‘Strange,’ he said, ‘that we should pass so easily with such a bright moon as this.’

“‘Not at all, Captain,’ I replied, ‘for they don’t suppose any one audacious enough to try tonight, of all nights.’

“‘By George, that’s so.’

“At that instant we heard a whizzing sound and saw a cannon ball describe a circle over our heads and disappear in the water on the other side.

“‘By George, that’s wonderful shooting,’ commented Ball. I was so frightened by this shot that I did not know what to do. Another shot followed.

“‘That’s beautiful,’ exclaimed Ball.

“By this time I was almost out of my senses. A third shot split the deck, ignited a bale of cotton, and wounded three men, not seriously, however; but it did no more damage to the ship than tear up part of the deck.

“‘That’s the finest shooting I’ve ever seen in my life,’ was Ball’s only remark. Again we had successfully run the blockade.

“On the next morning, when I came on deck, I looked at one of the most dejected groups of mortals that I have ever seen. Sitting on the chicken coop were the man, his wife, and their child between them, all looking as if they cared not whether they lived or died, sick as sick could be. I took a seat on a box, and, unobserved, sketched them in their misery. I showed



the drawing to the others, much to their amusement. When the gentleman concerned heard from some one who had seen the picture that I was the guilty artist, he asked me to show it to him. Quick to see the humor of it, he laughed heartily. 'John Tabb,' he said 'if this sketch were in my hands, fifty dollars could not buy it.' Needless to say, I gave it to him. I also drew a picture of the newspaper correspondent leaning over the rail. I can recall with what glee I teased him with a rag soaked in oil and used in cleaning the brass parts of the ship.

"We hugged the coast until we came to Halifax. Here we reconsidered our plans. The final decision was that twenty men, I being one, should hail the one gunboat, carrying but one gun, that guarded the mouth of the St. Lawrence River, board her, and master her crew. The ruse worked, and we captured the boat. We then proceeded to Montreal and Toronto, where we stopped over-night. Some time during the following morning our doctor rushed into the cabin with a *New York Tribune* in his hand, crying, 'We are betrayed!' There, on the front page, was the whole plot exposed. Who betrayed us we never learned, but we lost no time in retracing our course and in returning to the South. Again we ran the blockade.

"In the autumn [1863] I was seized with the break-bone fever and during my illness lived with the doctor who attended me."

[There is much confusion about this part of Father Tabb's life on account of the lack of definite knowledge and the consequent unfounded inferences and suppositions on the part of those who have essayed to write about him. I shall quote a few of these mis-statements before I try to set the whole matter straight.

Reverend D. O. Crowley, writing in the San Francisco *Monitor* for Christmas, 1912, says: "About the middle of November, 1863,<sup>31</sup> Tabb came back to his native coasts on the steamer *Robert E. Lee*, which was pursued and captured by the U. S. ship *Keystone State*. Among other prisoners our poet was sent to a northern dungeon at Old Lookout, Maryland."

M. S. Pine, misquoting a passage from an article of mine<sup>32</sup> printed in 1914, says: "Enlisting in the navy, he served as Captain's clerk on the steamer *Robert E. Lee*, which ran the blockade at Wilmington, N. C., twenty-one times. His first voyage to England under *that* (?) Captain, in 1862, was *memorized* (?) later by the appealing poem, *San Salvador*."

Mr. G. Watson James, Jr., likewise manifests a lack of necessary information in an article which was published recently.<sup>33</sup> "The young Captain's clerk followed the fortunes of the *Robert E. Lee*, running in gunpowder from the Azores and West Indies some twenty-odd times, their port being Wilmington, N. C. Later on, so the writer was told, he was one of the party of Confederate soldiers that went on the expedition to rescue the prisoners on Johnson Island, in the Great Lakes region. In the spring of 1864 young Tabb was sent by the government to the West Indies to bring back another ship which had been purchased. *This vessel lost her anchor off Beaufort, N. C., and was captured by the U. S. S. Siren* (although William Hand Browne, in his biographical sketch<sup>34</sup> says it was the *Keystone State* which effected the capture)." A few comments on this will not be out of place. According to Father Tabb the expedition to Johnson Island occurred before the capture of the *Robert E. Lee*, and not later; and *The Siren* was the name of

the vessel he was on when captured by the *Keystone State*. Professor Browne's report agrees with mine. We both derived it from the same source, independently of each other.

I attribute the fact that Father Tabb was not captured on the *Robert E. Lee* to the illness which befell him, according to his own statement, in the fall of 1863 and kept him from duty. Search among Civil War records has revealed the following facts. The *Robert E. Lee*, which was formerly the steamer *Giraffe*,<sup>35</sup> made one of the highest number of runs thru the blockade—twenty-one.<sup>36</sup> The ship was evidently on its way to Texas<sup>37</sup> with funds to pay the troops there, when it was captured off the coast of North Carolina on November 9, 1863.<sup>38</sup> Had it not been for his sickness, it is more than probable that Father Tabb would have been among those taken prisoners. His statement that he ran the blockade twenty-one times is also supported by this testimony, for, altho the ship may have made several trips before he entered the service, he had served on it for a year and after his recovery continued running the blockade during the spring of 1864 on the *Siren*.]

"In the spring [1864], when I was fully recovered, I was assigned by Major Ficklin to carry dispatches to Bermuda on the *Siren*,<sup>39</sup> commanded by Captain Pennington, whose home was in Bermuda. We were successful in evading the Federal boats until June 4,<sup>40</sup> when we were captured. I remember distinctly the details of our last voyage.

"Just before our departure from Wilmington Major Ficklin gave me one hundred dollars in gold for my personal expenses. As soon as we arrived in Bermuda, we put the *Siren* up for badly needed repairs.

During the two weeks required for this I lived at Captain Pennington's home as one of the family. There I met Mr. Tucker, then in his eighties, the husband of Nea,<sup>41</sup> of whom Thomas Moore wrote after she had rejected his proposal of marriage during his brief residence on the island.<sup>42</sup> The day after we left Bermuda the ship sprang a leak. When the Captain told me of this latest misfortune, strange to say, I remained calm. After arduous work the breech was mended. When we were approaching Beaufort, N. C., we reduced our speed to about two miles an hour. It was late at night and pitch dark. Captain Pennington informed me that we were either at this point or that, but that the only measure we could adopt to advantage was to anchor where we then were. Accordingly, the anchor was cast, altho we knew that the blockading fleet was near at hand. At the first sign of dawn, June 4, two sailors cut the hawser. Swish went the chain, and a bomb exploded about the same time just in front of the *Siren*. We knew then that we were lost. Rushing below, I gathered my dispatches and other important papers, bound them in a bag, which I weighted with an iron ball and dropped into the sea. The documents were safe, but I,—well that's another story. In a row-boat we were taken first to the Federal ship *Keystone State*,<sup>43</sup> and the next day we were sent to Wilmington. Captain Pennington lost his mind for a time, because he attributed our capture to his neglect.

"Five of us were ordered to Old Point Comfort to be court-martialled. At the trial the judge demanding my name, place of birth, and residence, I answered the first two inquiries honestly, altho the Penningtons would have sworn that I was English by birth had I

not prevented them. But in reply to the third question I could not restrain myself from jesting and said: 'England, France, Scotland, Canada and Bermuda.' We were all sentenced to Bull Pen, at Point Lookout, Maryland. We reached this abominable place late at night and surrounded by guards were held on the wharf until morning. Before our names were entered on the prison list we were searched. Anticipating this, I had divided forty of the fifty dollars remaining to me of the Major's gift among my four companions, so that each of us might be credited with the amount of money found on his person.

"Then began the most terrible experiences of my life. I can never forget the hardships brought on by lack of food, clothing, proper shelter, hospital accommodations, and sanitation.<sup>44</sup> The camp was nothing but a collection of A-tents and Bell-tents, covering about 20 acres, and surrounded by palisades and a heavy guard. Almost every prisoner was sick."<sup>45</sup>

[Father Tabb frequently recounted to his students the most harrowing details of personal misery and pain experienced during his imprisonment. They are, in fact, too horrible to repeat here.<sup>46</sup> It was in the heat of such reminiscences that Father Tabb showed plainly that he was still an unredeemed rebel.]

"For two months I suffered from diarrhoea and saw men die at the rate of fifteen and twenty a day.<sup>45</sup>

"To help my friends, the Penningtons, out of this suffering, I appealed to the British representative in Washington, as they were Englishmen. After a wearisome correspondence of ten weeks I secured their release.<sup>47</sup> They went to New York, where, before sailing for Bermuda, they deposited their share of my money in a local bank and forwarded me a box of supplies.



I had asked them to put a five-dollar gold piece in a sausage. When they sent the box, they wrote me to the effect that they had been able to do all but one thing; thereupon I jumped to the conclusion that they referred to the money. As I was in the hospital when the box came, I gave what was perishable to some fellow-prisoners. A short time afterwards one of them came to me and said: 'Tabb, I'm a fairly honest man; here's five dollars I found in one of the sausages.'

"When I was well again, I sent a letter to Major Brady, an unprincipled, infamous character, who was in immediate charge of the prisoners, asking whether my deposit of ten dollars was valued in gold or silver. To this and other letters he paid no attention. One day, therefore, as he was riding round camp, I approached him and demanded a reply to my letters. 'Rebel,' he said, 'it's worth twenty dollars.'

"Shortly after this I lost my five-dollar gold piece. A scoundrel by the name of Williams borrowed the money from me and then, when I asked him to return it, denied that he had ever received it from me.

"I recall two boys, named Cunningham, one fourteen years old and the other fifteen, who were captured about six months after my advent into Bull Pen. I used to share my slender supplies with them. The younger died in prison, but the other, as pretty as an angel, lived to be a reprobate.

"I was accustomed to go about the hospital tents and to read to the men. Perhaps today I would be sitting between two beds that on the morrow would have new occupants. Men died fast.

"Here, in this hell-hole, I met Sidney Lanier. One day, while I was lying in my cot, ill with fever, the distant notes of a flute reached my ears from the op-

posite side of the camp.<sup>48</sup> I was entranced. I said to myself, 'I must find that man.' As soon as I got out of bed I commenced searching, with the result that I found the flutist in the poet Sidney Lanier.<sup>49</sup> From that happy moment until my release we spent the time together. We became fast friends and always remained such. I remember that Sidney Lanier and I were often amused and entertained by a Polish doctor, a learned man and a capable singer, an exile from his country, who would talk for hours on classical subjects and could sing some of the arias from the famous operas admirably, often, in rendering a love song, working himself up to the height of passion. My recollection of this unfortunate creature is still as keen and sympathetic now in my own distress as it was then.

"My life here, Sidney Lanier's friendship alone excepted,<sup>50</sup> was so miserable and wretched that I would have given anything to free myself from that camp. Towards the end of my seventh month's imprisonment I heard that an exchange boat was due. Thereupon I sought an interview with Major Brady<sup>51</sup> and obtained it. When the Major dismissed his orderly and bluntly asked my business, I told him that, if he could in any way secure my exchange, I would consider it by the payment of fifty gold dollars. As soon as he heard the word gold, he grasped my hand and said, 'Johnny Rebel, I'll do it, but you cannot go on this boat. Wait for the next one.' Two days later the boat arrived and also the order for my exchange. It had not come thru Brady, but thru a friend of mine in charge of the exchange on the Southern side. When I received the news of my good fortune I hurriedly packed my few belongings, among them a book on harmony, bade good-bye to Lanier,<sup>52</sup> and searched out

Brady. He refused to listen to me and demanded the report. Warned by a doctor on the staff, I refused to give it to him. Angered at the loss of prospective gold, he tried to bully me, but I held on to my report. I was taken aboard ship and treated very kindly by my friend, Captain Mulvey. He sent me a big cup of steaming coffee and the first real meal I had in over eight months. Heaven itself seemed then to open to me. It was the morning of the following day when we reached Richmond. I set out at once for home. In fact, I was sent home by the commanding officer on account of a large sore on my breast, which was so sunken that I appeared to be in the last stages of consumption. I cannot measure the joy that I felt at again seeing my parents and sister, altho the joy was mingled with pain at the sight of the destruction done our home and lands. I stayed with them for a month, and then my family persuaded me to join my brother's regiment. I was sad at leaving them, for I knew not whether I should ever return to see them again. None of my family was informed of the true state of affairs at Richmond. But I went, accompanied by a young neighbor. That night we both had to sleep on the cold ground. When we reached Richmond, the city had already capitulated.<sup>53</sup> A few days later Major Ficklin, having heard of my arrival, sent for me, and surprised me by what he had to say. 'As I feel,' he said, 'that I am the cause of all your wretchedness since the capture of the *Siren*, and as I still have some means left, I am going to send you to Baltimore to study music. Without resources, almost penniless as my family was, I accepted this offer gladly.

"The Major brought me to Baltimore and as I was unacquainted there introduced me to the Glenns. I

became very intimate with them and have always had a large place in my heart for them, and also for the Hamiltons, whom I came to know later. I obtained board and lodging in a house at Charles and Pleasant streets. I had a piano in my room and often practiced as many as seven hours a day. The Major placed me in charge of a German musician, Professor Roemer, a capable teacher and a skillful performer, who used to come to my room to give me instructions. Occasionally, however, I would walk to his home on Light Street.<sup>54</sup>

"While I was living in this neighborhood, close to St. Paul's, I became acquainted with the rector, Dr. Mahan,<sup>55</sup> and as I was an Episcopalian, I used to attend the services at his church regularly. Thus it was that I met Dr. Mahan, and thru him Mr. Curtis, afterwards the Catholic Bishop of Wilmington. I admired the rector for his learning, but I loved Alfred Curtis.

"I had been in Baltimore slightly longer than a year when the news reached me that Major Ficklin's fortune had collapsed, just at the time when I was being put to bed on account of symptoms of typhoid fever. A homeopathic doctor, called in by one of my friends, did me no good. His efforts, it seemed to me, tended rather to increase my sufferings. The lady in whose house I was living, however, took great interest in me and could not have been more solicitous about her own child. One day during my illness, thinking that I was asleep, for it was near morning, she stole softly into my room and, bending down, kissed my feet. This touching act, done also to the Saviour of men, impressed itself so deeply on my mind that in after years the remembrance of it inspired the poem I have called *Consecration*.<sup>56</sup> As I was growing worse daily, the

homeopathist was dismissed and an allopath, Dr. Donaldson, called in. After a few visits this physician declared that I must go to a hospital and accordingly sent me to the Church Home on Broadway. My mother, who had been informed of my condition, came to the city and nursed me so faithfully that I know I owe my life to her. In the latter part of November (1866), I had three hemorrhages, after which I recovered rapidly. At my doctor's orders I went to visit an aunt in New Orleans. On the voyage to Cuba, where I stopped for a day, I met Barnum, the circus man, and found him, as one might suspect, very entertaining. I reached New Orleans three days before Christmas. Among the presents I received was, I remember, a tray of oranges, just pulled from the tree and still wet with dew. After staying here for more than a month, I returned to Baltimore."



## CHAPTER III

### CONVERSION TO CATHOLICISM AND PREPARATION FOR PRIESTHOOD

"I was now confronted with the necessity of making my own living. Shortly after my arrival, therefore, I applied to Dr. Mahan for counsel and help, and he in his great kindness offered me a position as teacher in the school for boys connected with St. Paul's.<sup>57</sup> During the Lenten season of that year I followed the instructions and sermons that he gave, and I was struck by his exposition of the seven sacraments, which was similar to the Catholic interpretation. On Good Friday I made my first confession to him, and I admit that I was frightened. Perhaps he was as fearful as I, for this, he told me, was only the second confession he had ever heard.

After this confession I made others, but I chose another confessor. I was becoming intimate with Mr. Curtis, who was then pastor of Mt. Calvary Church and a High Churchman. He believed in the Real Presence, the veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the Sacrifice of the Mass, which he offered; he heard confessions and wore priestly clothes and vestments. Finding him a real companion, I turned to him in all my difficulties and always had helpful advice and encouragement. Many a confession did I make to him

during those years of association. Friendly and interested as we were in questions of religion, it was utterly impossible for me to escape the influence of his leaning to Rome. Curtis was dissatisfied and restless; he was looking for something he could not find in Anglicanism. He was meeting the same problem as Newman, and he must have felt that his own solution was to be that of the Oratorian."

[How far Mr. Curtis was departing from the way of his church and how strong his influence on his friend Tabb must needs have been can readily be seen by consulting some of the former's parochial reports.<sup>58</sup>

"1867: Morning and Evening prayers daily. Litany said at noon on Wednesdays and Fridays, on Ember Days and Rogation Days, and daily during Lent. Holy Communion celebrated *every Sunday*, and on *all Feast Days occurring in the week.*" (Page 50.)

"1868: During the past year a *daily* celebration of the Holy Eucharist *during the octaves of the greater festivals.*" (Page 43.)

"1869: *Daily* celebration of the Eucharist." (Page 51.)

His progress toward the Catholic Church is evident in the change from a weekly celebration to a daily celebration of the Eucharist.]

"The breaking point of Curtis' belief in the Episcopal church was reached about June, 1870, when a Synod decreed a change in the doctrine of two sacraments. Thereafter both he and I read and thought, argued and prayed, in order to find our haven of rest. But God takes his own time. Before making a final decision in this matter, I left Baltimore to accept a posi-

tion in Racine College, Wisconsin, at the salary of fifty dollars a month and board. This was another Episcopalian institution of which the Rev. James de Koven was the Warden.

[Father Tabb's narrative at this point presented a problem of considerable difficulty. So concerned was he evidently with the details of the process of his conversion to the Catholic Church that he lost sight of specific dates. But, as I could not ignore the evident lack of knowledge of his whereabouts from 1870 to 1872, I proceeded to investigate elsewhere, with surprising results.

First, I learned that while he was teaching at St. Paul's School he had determined to prepare for the Episcopalian ministry<sup>59</sup> and that he had been commissioned a Lay Reader.<sup>60</sup>

Secondly, I discovered that his stay at Racine College, whither he went in 1870, was short, so short, in fact, that his name did not even appear in the catalog,<sup>61</sup> and that the reason why he left soon after his arrival was that he was summoned home on account of the illness of his sister.<sup>62</sup> There, at home, he continued to reside until he was received into the Catholic Church.

He did not resign his position in order to enter the Episcopal Seminary at Alexandria, Virginia, and to pursue a course of theological studies, as M. S. Pine avers.<sup>63</sup> The presumption is against his attendance at this Seminary, for Bishop Whittingham was a Northerner and Dr. Mahan a supporter of the General Theological Seminary in New York. Inquiry also brought a denial from the present Rector that he was ever a student there. Likewise Mr. Hale (p. 796) declares that "St. Charles' was the only college in which he ever studied."

Thirdly, I discovered that even a contemporary of his, and his ecclesiastical superior, was as much puzzled

concerning his whereabouts as I myself. Apparently he dropped out of sight and deliberately kept others, even his friends, ignorant of his place of retirement. Nor did he choose to inform even the bishop in whose diocese he was an admitted candidate for the ministry. But such was the case. In his address to the Maryland Convention of May 29, 1872,<sup>64</sup> Bishop William R. Whittingham singled him out for a rather startling mention.

"One candidate, Mr. John B. Tabb," he said, "I now give notice, that not having heard from him for more than eight months and being ignorant of his present address, I shall be under the necessity of removing his name from the list, if he be not heard from within the next six months." As the Bishop did not hear from his subject, he executed his warning in the following year. In his address of May 28, 1873,<sup>65</sup> he said: "One (Candidate for Holy Orders) John B. Tabb, has been stricken from the list as non-reporting." In the meantime his subject had embraced the Catholic faith and had matriculated at St. Charles' College to prepare himself for the priesthood.]

"Shortly afterwards Curtis informed me that he was about to enter the Catholic Church and that he had determined, before taking the final step, to consult Father Newman<sup>66</sup>. In a letter he told me of the impressions he had of the English convert: he found him kindly, simple, understanding, convincing, and thoroughly satisfied with the change he had made. A few months later my friend was received into the Catholic Church.

"I, too, was progressing in my advance towards Rome, although somewhat slowly. Very gradual, in fact, was my conversion. It began as far back as 1862, when I was associated with Major Ficklin. Strange it was, indeed, that he should be the beginning, for he was a man of no religion and of rather loose morals,

but extraordinarily generous to the Sisters of Charity. He used to say to me, 'Theirs is the only true religion.' I learned of a few of the doctrines and practices of the Church while in Cuba and from Father Bannon, who went abroad with us on our trip to England. I increased my knowledge considerably while I was studying piano in Baltimore and later after meeting Curtis. The last impulse came to me from an unexpected quarter. One evening I knocked at the door of the room of the rector of Racine College and, thinking that I heard him say, 'Come in,' entered at once. Imagine my surprise and his. There he was, kneeling on a prie-dieu before a statue of the Blessed Virgin, set between two candles in a wall cupboard, the door of which was open. I asked him whether he believed in the Blessed Virgin and in honoring her, and if he did believe in her, why he was afraid to acknowledge his belief. His reply showed me his cowardice. 'I believe,' he said, 'but I must pray in secret; they would not keep me here if they knew.' Closer study of the doctrines and practices of the Catholic Church brought me to realize the fact that Peter has the keys. This conviction sealed my conversion."

Here ends the detailed record reproducing Father Tabb's own account of his life from 1861 to 1870. I have verified the dates and places and names, whenever possible, in order to assure the correctness of the statements made and have checked them with information derived from other sources, few as they are. For the details of his subsequent life, that is, from his conversion to his death, I am indebted to my own experience as a student at St. Charles' from 1905 to 1911, to information offered by members of the faculties of St. St. Charles' College and St. Mary's Seminary, and to other sources which I shall acknowledge in the proper place.



It was not long after his friend Curtis' conversion that John Tabb sought admission into the historic fold. Curtis was baptized (conditionally) in England on April 18, 1872.<sup>67</sup> Tabb was baptized (also conditionally) in Richmond by Bishop Gibbons, the late Cardinal of Baltimore, on September 8, 1872.<sup>68</sup> John was the solitary Catholic in his family, which was Episcopalian from the first to the last,<sup>69</sup> and he was always more or less an exile from the family circle, for his relatives would have nothing to do with him for a long time after his conversion.<sup>70</sup> As he decided to study for the priesthood, he accordingly applied, two months later,<sup>71</sup> for admission to St. Charles' College, which was then situated about five and a half miles from Ellicott City, Maryland, in a most beautiful section of Howard County, and opposite the historic Doughoregan Manor, the home of Charles Carroll of Carrollton, the signer of the Declaration of Independence and the founder of the College.<sup>72</sup> At the time of his entrance he was in his twenty-ninth year, an age at which he could be relatively certain that his choice was wise and one that he need never regret, founded as it was upon mature thought and actual experience in the world. St. Charles' henceforth became his home except for the vacations, which he spent elsewhere, sometimes at "The Forest,"<sup>73</sup> at other times in Richmond, and for the years of his residence at St. Mary's Seminary. Having completed his collegiate studies, he was graduated in June, 1875. Contrary to his expectations, he did not go on immediately with his philosophical and theological studies. As it was the custom of his Bishop to select some of his subjects to serve as teachers in the Cathedral school, it fell to the lot of the young graduate to spend the next two years and a half as a teacher of grammar school studies, mathematics excepted,<sup>74</sup> in St. Peter's

Boys' School, Richmond.<sup>75</sup> Sometime about the end of 1877 or the beginning of 1878 he left Richmond for St. Charles'.<sup>76</sup> Because his ability had attracted the attention of the faculty of the college, he returned at their request to assume the responsibilities of an instructor.<sup>77</sup> While he was teaching Greek and English, he was also reading philosophy,<sup>78</sup> so that he might enter the theological department as soon as he resumed his work at St. Mary's.

Thus<sup>78</sup> it was that his theological studies were postponed until September 14, 1881, when he entered the Seminary.<sup>78</sup> Little of importance is known of his years here. He lived the usual life of the seminarian, a regular life devoted to much study and prayer, with only little recreation. Although he was at first, on account of his repute as a poet and wit, regarded by his fellow-seminarians with something akin to awe, he soon won them all by his humble and democratic attitude, and by his sense of humor and sociability.<sup>79</sup> Two jests that date from this time are worth repeating. While he was studying the Arian heresy, Father Abram Ryan visited the seminary. As it was rumored that the latter did not stand well with his Bishop, Tabb approached a fellow-student with the remark, "Father Ryan is a heretic." "Why?" he was asked. "Because," was his reply, "he is an A-Ryan."

At another time, during some lectures on a particularly difficult tract of dogmatic theology, he requested that in the event of his death the following inscription be placed over his grave: "Here lies John B. Tabb, D. D." In answer to the inquiry, "What does D. D. stand for?" he explained that the meaning was "Died of Dogma."

One event, however, that occurred during his seminary days has a literary importance. It was from the

Seminary that he issued his first volume of poems, without date or name of publisher. This collection, together with the question of the date, I shall discuss in another chapter. All thru this period he was likewise writing for some of the leading magazines.

His preparation for the priesthood finished, he was called to Orders at the beginning of Advent, 1884, and after making the customary retreat was ordained priest by Bishop Gibbons in the Baltimore Cathedral, on December 20.<sup>76</sup> Perhaps it was the proximity of the Feast of the Nativity that led Father Tabb to delay offering his First Mass until Christmas, and his humility that kept him, as M. S. Pine says,<sup>80</sup> from celebrating the other two masses the Church permits her priests on that day. After the Gospel of his First Mass he made a short address to those present in the College Chapel and thanked them for the beautiful chalice they had given him in token of their esteem and love. For almost twenty-five years, from this Christmas day until his death, Father Tabb lived at St. Charles' College, where he influenced generation after generation of students and adorned his Alma Mater with the brilliant gems of his poetry.

Henceforth Father Tabb's life was the regular life of the College and was therefore devoid of those exciting incidents that in themselves and in relation to literary work make the lives of most literary men peculiarly fascinating. With the faculty and students he followed the daily order of living: rising at half-past five or six o'clock; attending community prayers and meditation in the morning and evening; saying his Mass; taking his meals at seven, twelve, and six o'clock; teaching two or three classes; enjoying his recreations after meals with the students in the music room, on the ball-alley, or in walking through the fields and

woods; and retiring not later than half-past nine. Such was the routine of life on all days but Sundays and holidays, when he spent longer periods in his room or in rambling about the country, or visited his few friends in the city.

It is this sameness of life at St. Charles' and the absence of stirring events in his own life that force upon me an entirely different treatment of this period from that ordinarily followed in biographical writing. I have concluded that I cannot do better than group in separate divisions those incidents that extend over these many years but are related as manifestations of particular characteristics. I shall therefore devote several chapters to the consideration of Father Tabb as priest, teacher, friend, man, and author.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE PRIEST.

Father Tabb became a priest principally because his superiors in the seminary counselled him to accept the call of his bishop. He would have been content to remain a simple deacon, so exalted was his conception of the priesthood and so humble the opinion of himself. Altho he was ordained as a member of the secular clergy, who have as their specific duty the serving of the spiritual and often temporal needs of the laity thru the parish church and societies, he chose rather to live the retired life of the priests of the Society of St. Sulpice, whose sole purpose it is to conduct seminaries and prepare young men for the priesthood.<sup>81</sup> However, he never joined the Society.

As a result of this choice, he exercised few of the duties of most priests. I have not been able to ascertain whether he ever officiated at wedding or funeral, or ever administered the last rites or baptism. If he ever performed any of these offices, he seldom did so, and then only during the few weeks he used to spend during the early part of his summer vacations at St. Peter's Cathedral in Richmond. Here, and occasionally elsewhere, he delivered sermons that were always marked by brevity, straight thinking, and plain language. Few of these sermons, as far as I know, are extant. The only one I have seen in print is that on the Immaculate Conception. He liked to talk especially



to children, perhaps because he could indulge in humor more freely with them than with their serious elders. After his eccentric and independent manner he is said to have preached a sermon, unmatched, I dare say, for brevity and point and boldness in all the annals of homiletics. A large congregation of boys and girls had assembled one morning in Richmond to hear their beloved Father Tabb preach. He began very solemnly and spoke as follows:

"In all God's universe there is one, and only one, creature whom we know positively to be damned. And that creature is the Devil. But remember, my dear young friends, tho the Devil is damned, he is no damn fool."<sup>82</sup> Despite the terrific shock this last unpriestly phrase must have caused the youthful congregation, its force must have given them thought for some weeks thereafter.

Like all priests, he said Mass daily, read the Breviary, made morning and evening meditations, and heard confessions. He was wont to say Mass in the little chapel in the third gallery, than which there was no more austere corner in all that beautiful Gothic church. Here also he passed many hours of his life in meditation. Much of his poetry gathers the fruit of these communings with the spiritual world, as well as of his daily readings in the Breviary. The fly-leaves of the four volumes<sup>83</sup> are all covered with half lines, verses, and stanzas, some complete, others incomplete, and all difficult to read, which he had jotted down from some inspiration caught from the office of the day.

If his priesthood was not exhibited in discharging the ordinary duties of the parish priest, it was present in his life and poetry. The true priest is the spokesman for the spiritual world, and none was ever more

so than he. Unlike many of the clergy today who are a scandal and a stumbling block on account of their worldly lives, ill suited with the teachings of Christ and their vow of poverty, he lived a life of genuine self-sacrifice, of high thoughts, and of lofty ideals.

Read his poems if you would discover what profound meaning the teachings of God and His Church had for him, a convert, and if you would know how profound was the message the liturgical year brought to him. Theological doctrines like the Fall and Redemption, Divine Providence, the Seven Sacraments, and the Immaculate Conception, lost their abstractness in the beautiful figurative expressions conceived in a soul sensitive to the symbolism of nature. The major feasts of the Church, Easter and Christmas, in particular, and the various seasons, especially Advent and Lent, contributed heavily to his poetic treasury.

But as all this is part rather of his poetry than of his priesthood, it should be mentioned here only incidentally and reserved for full treatment in a subsequent chapter.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE TEACHER.

Father Tabb was a born teacher — an expression, to be sure, very much overworked, but one that cannot be dispensed with in characterizing the best teachers. If there was anything as natural to him as writing poetry, it was certainly his ability to teach. No one with the least spark of intelligence could fail to understand his homely illustrations or his lucid explanations. No one with a working knowledge of his *Bone Rules* ever had much difficulty with Latin and Greek. Odd and vulgar as his illustrations sometimes were, they never failed to illumine the subject and to make the dark ways bright. Individual as his methods were, they achieved results that have stood the tests of time in countless men, and that are sought after, but rarely obtained, by accepted modern pedagogical methods. In addition to this power of bringing new knowledge to other minds was that indefinable medium-like faculty of his personality to penetrate the developing mind of the boy and to direct its development—certainly, a privilege and power as rare as great. Many a student owes his love for literature or his taste for the higher things in life to the one year or two that he spent under Father Tabb.

Father Tabb's method of instruction was unlike all others; it was characteristically unique. No one else at St. Charles' taught, or tried to teach, as he taught, for

no one could. His course was singular in many respects: in the text-books used; the small exercises and short lessons; the impromptu verses suggested by an incident in the schoolroom or by the name of a student; the homely examples pressed into service of grammar; the eccentric system of grading; the odd punishments; and the artistic interpretation of a tale of Poe's, a poem of Shelley's, a scene from *Macbeth*, or a canto from the *Ancient Mariner*.

The chief text-books used in his class were his own *Bone Rules* and Dickens' *Cricket on the Hearth*. He dictated whatever he wanted us to learn outside the pages of his little Grammar, which he expected us to know thoroly from cover to cover. Some of these dictated rules and expositions were to be added in a revised edition of the *Bone Rules* and are to be found, together with many other additions, in a *Grammar* privately printed by the Rev. Joseph F. Tuscher. His daily assignments for study were unbelievably short; so short, in fact, that the uninitiated at first looked upon them as a joke, until they discovered how much material Father Tabb could find in them. Instruction in grammar was fortified by lessons thrice a week in spelling and intensive reading. Dickens' story supplied the words for spelling as well as the passages for close reading. Occasionally other texts were substituted, such as Byron's *Prisoner of Chillon* or Poe's *Raven*.

These short assignments for study were matched by exercises equally brief. Father Tabb's daily custom was to have each student diagram in the study-hall two sentences of good or bad English, as the case might be, found in his *Bone Rules* and bring them to class. Here, before he collected the papers, he would give a sentence which we had to diagram on the other

side of our study-hall exercises. As soon as we had finished diagraming it, we handed in our papers. This was the extent of our written work, excepting the prescribed examinations every six weeks. Never had students so little to do, apparently; yet never did students learn and understand so well and so easily what they were taught. Professor Egan, of the Catholic University, is reported to have said to one of his students who had studied under Father Tabb: "Aren't you a student of Father Tabb's?" "Yes," was the reply. "I thought so," he said, "for every student of his seems to have an instinctive grammatical sense."

The reason of Father Tabb's phenomenal success is neither far to seek nor mysterious. It is a method, however, now in eclipse, a method that has been replaced by one that is causing untold havoc to the present generation of school children. It is a method that sharpens the mental perceptions and forms the judgment, while it does its proper task of imparting the conventions of correct usage and structure. It is none other than grammar study that does not shun technical names and balk at definition of terms and analysis of sentences. The latter, I am ready to agree, is generally made impossible and obnoxious by the complicated and outlandish schemes employed here, there, and everywhere for diagraming. It is in this feature that one unmistakable element of Father Tabb's success is to be found and that, it seems to me, he has made a substantial contribution to descriptive grammar and to pedagogy. He has devised a simple, but effective and satisfactory, kind of diagram, the mechanical elements of which are few and easy to grasp and retain. Examination of other schemes of diagraming has convinced me that the adoption of Father Tabb's would be a long step forward in over-



coming the hatred for diagramming prevalent among school children and would make far easier the student's mastery of grammar. Another feature in its favor is its adaptability to the diagramming of Greek and Latin sentences. As a matter of fact, second-year students of Father Tabb were frequently assigned long sentences from Caesar and Cicero for this graphic analysis. Such was the training that laid a firm grammatical foundation for an elegant cultural superstructure.

Many of the sentences diagrammed in class were suggested by names of students or local events and were often put in the form of verse. This habit of impromptu versifying was a habit of his that was constantly in evidence. Many students, now scattered in all parts of the country, possess a skit on their names or on some event in which they took part. These bits of verse were generally made to do service in illustrating some rule of grammar or principle of language. I recall such a skit in which my own name occurs together with that of a classmate, now Father Thomas Vincent Fitzgerald, of Washington. As we were studying the absolute construction, he used it to test our knowledge thereof.

"The baby having Fits,  
We sent for Doctor Litz."

The following letter which was sent to Professor Browne is self-explanatory:

"NICK'S RATIFICATION

A rat attempting once to peel  
A sleeping lad, named Nick O'Neil,  
One of his friends suggested that  
He should procure a Tabby-cat.

## THE DOCTOR'S ADVICE

If the fat-lip  
Come from cat-nip,  
Then on that lip  
Rub some cat-nip.

One of my pupils, a short time ago, was bitten by a rat. The above is a little *class exercise* given on the strength of the performance. Thank you for the compliment of your delicate lines and assurance of sympathy; I am

Always affectionately yours,  
J. B. T."

Here is a quatrain used to show that the particular use of a word in a sentence determines what part of speech it is.

You *head* the list;  
I *hand* the quill  
And *toe* the mark  
And *foot* the bill.<sup>84</sup>

Who but an irrepressible humorist would have thought of listing the common prepositions in verse. But that is exactly what Father Tabb has done.

With on for after, at by in,  
Against in stead of, near between,  
By off from under, according to,  
Athwart across, beyond about,  
Before behind, within, without,  
Among, around, amidst, above,  
Toward notwithstanding, into of,  
Beside aboard, betwixt upon—  
Are prepositons every one.<sup>85</sup>

To illustrate the difference in pronunciation and meaning of words spelt alike, he used among others the following quatrain, published later in *Child Verse*.

## THE SAME WITH A DIFFERENCE

When first they wed he was a singer,  
 And much delight his songs did bring her;  
 But now-a-days he proves a singer,  
 And makes it hot for her as ginger.<sup>88</sup>

He had remarkable facility in versifying sentences full of errors, which we were asked to correct before diagraming. *Bone Rules* contains a collection of these choice offerings to his ungrammatical muse.<sup>87</sup> I consider the following selections gems of this type:

Him and me being about the same height  
 Is often mistook for each other at night.  
 But the sun having rose on our features to shine,  
 You can see that his eyes is some littler than mine.<sup>88</sup>

"Lay still," his mother often said,  
 When Washington had went to bed.  
 But little Georgie would reply,  
 "I set up, but I cannot lie."<sup>89</sup>

Grammatical rules were also rendered easy by means of rime. Two quatrains on the adjective and adverb are here offered.<sup>90</sup>

"To bodies, *color, shape* and *size*  
 And *weight* the adjective supplies;  
 And gives to things we cannot see  
 Their *rank, and worth, and quality.*"

"The *time, the place, or whither, whence,*  
 The manner *how, the reason why,*  
 The *purpose, cause and consequence*  
 The adverb can alone supply."

This peculiar way of illustrating points of grammar he seems to have in mind in these verses.

## FOR A YOUNGSTER

If what I have sung—  
Stirred the heart of a youngster,  
'Twill not be in vain  
That I rattled my brain.<sup>91</sup>

In harmony with the unusual features of his teaching was his system of grading. A certain bishop of the West is said to have received from Father Tabb an examination paper belonging to one of the students from his diocese, and, having observed a large zero on it, at once wrote to Father Tabb asking him whether he thought it worth while for such a dull student to continue his studies. "Dull," Father Tabb replied, "he's the most brilliant student we have at the college. Zero with me means perfect—no mistakes." The system was paradoxical. Father Tabb graded on the basis of a hundred, but not in the ordinary way. He indicated the number of mistakes made in diagraming (spelling and reading were accounted separately) on every exercise returned to the student. The daily mistakes were totaled at the end of every six weeks, and the total was subtracted from a hundred. However, additional credits, indicated by the plus sign on the exercises, could be gained by the correct analysis of difficult sentences or parsing of words in difficult constructions. These were then added to the original difference. Needless to say, those students who received a grade in the nineties deserved it.

His way of administering punishment, as might be supposed from what I have already said of other details of class management, was not free from the odd. It even approached the ludicrous. On the whole, he had the least of all the teachers to concern himself with matters of discipline. He was always so clear and vivid in his explanation, so humorous and original

in his questioning, so inspiring in his manner, that he monopolized the student's attention.<sup>92</sup> But there were always at the beginning of the scholastic year a few freshmen who tried some of their tricks on him, much to their subsequent regret and sorrow. For he could administer a tongue-lashing that hurt more than any corporal punishment and left keener mental anguish. He had the same dexterity in choosing the bitter, cutting words as he exercised in selecting the most delicate word for his finest poetry. The only corporal punishment that he used was butting heads. If only one student was to be punished, then Father Tabb would butt the student's head against his own; if two were guilty he would butt their heads against each other. Nor was the butt gentle; frequently it induced a headache. The whole was a mock-solemn ceremony, and woe betide the one that laughed at it.

Over and above all these oddities that I have endeavored to portray in Father Tabb as a teacher shines the far-reaching light of his wonderful stimulating personality. The spirit of the poet could not be hidden under the flesh of the teacher. Truly indeed did the poet animate the teacher. A chance word or sentence or allusion was the sesame that unlocked the treasures of English literature. He felt keenly the beauty and power and life of all the masterpieces of English that appealed to him and found an echo in his soul, and he never tired of trying to interpret these as he saw and felt them, so that others might come to the same high appreciation of the gods, as he called the master bards,<sup>93</sup> that he himself held to be the greatest of human joys. To hear him recite "Blow winds, and crack your cheeks! rage, blow;" "Then comes my fit again;" "Where the bee sucks, there suck I;" "Full fathom five thy father lies;" "Give me my robe, put



on my crown;" "Hail to thee, blithe spirit;" "My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains my senses;" "In the greenest of the valleys;" and "Once upon a midnight dreary"—was to touch the hem of the garment of poetry and be cured of diseased taste forever.

His recitations were distinguished by deliberate interpretation which he expressed in mood, voice, and gesture. They cast a veritable spell on us, and made us oblivious of his ugly face and awkward movements. He had a real talent for the tragic and weird, and had the power to induce those feeling in others. Sometimes he would read one of Poe's tales and would select the most uncanny portion for interpretative reading. *The Fall of the House of Usher*, *The Black Cat*, *The Pit and the Pendulum* were his favorites.

"We ran with him," testifies one of his gifted students, Monsignor S. T. Duggan,<sup>94</sup> "through the gamut of *The Bells*, from the riotous roar to the softest tinnabulations. And even the most apathetic was forced to wipe away a tear at realizing the full sadness of the untimely taking off of 'that rare and radiant maiden whom the angels named Lenore.' Toward the end of one session the teacher went to one corner of the classroom, crouched, and began to recite *The Skylark*. The students were transfixed. When he had finished, he was on tiptoe at the opposite corner of the room, breathless, as if eager to follow the bird in its flight. Instinctively the class broke into tumultuous applause. He modestly repressed our enthusiasm with the remark: "Gentlemen, did you see that Skylark soar? Did you hear him sing? If there is a single boy in this class who did not see that bird and hear him, I forbid him ever again to open a book of poetry, for it would be sheer waste of time."

This was his way of teaching literature; he knew no other. When he was requested by the faculty to

teach the Poetry Class, he refused with the remark, "Were I to *teach poetry*, I should feel like the surgeon who would dissect himself."<sup>95</sup> He was never the professor of English literature, as some biographical sketches record. He was not concerned with critical editions, literary investigations, biographical minutiae; all these were after his time of preparation. And since these matters were alien to him, he confined his teaching career deliberately to giving instruction in first and second year high school English.

This, in my opinion, was the wisest decision he could have made both for his own efficiency and for the general good of all the students who ever attended St. Charles' during his lifetime. He wielded an influence second to none of the faculty. He took raw material, often of poor quality, and converted it into a finished product of at least fair grade. He sensed the various difficulties of students and with almost womanly sympathy busied himself with overcoming them. If he found a boy who was delicate, timid, or sensitive, in a twinkling he brought him out of himself, interested, cheered, encouraged, and in time led him on to accomplish all that was in him.<sup>96</sup> And, above all, he was more than a Moses who could lead his students to the borders of the promised Land of Literature; he was a Josue who could lead them to the very heart of the new land and give them possession "of every place that the sole of their foot trod upon."

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE FRIEND.

Friendship to Father Tabb was a sacred relation. It signified in truth the binding of two souls in a bond of common interests and a large sympathy for the spiritual and temporal welfare of each. It meant the expression of his own love for the other in a thousand different ways. It assured his unreserved assistance wherever and in whatsoever form it was needed. As Father Connor said in his eulogy at Father Tabb's funeral, "He considered no sacrifice too great, no demand upon his time or means too large, no personal concern or disappointment or aspiration too trivial, no necessities of sickness too repulsive, when it was a question of his friends. His loyalty resembled more the unselfishness and disinterestedness of a woman's devotion than any quality we are accustomed to find in man's love for man." But it also demanded a loyalty to him that was somewhat selfish, and that, when not given or when betrayed, not only cost his friendship, but also incurred his vehement displeasure.

The students of St. Charles' never had a more liberal or dependable friend among the faculty. They called him familiarly their "Refugium Peccatorum." Let a student, whether of the senior or junior division, find himself in trouble of any kind, serious or slight, from going "out of bounds" or breaking the rule of silence, to smoking behind the backstop, visiting without permission, or "rough-housing" in the dormitory, and he

lost no time in seeking Father Tabb—not because the latter invariably took the side of the student irrespective of the right or wrong of the case, but because he was always sympathetic and helpful. In innumerable instances he played the role of arbitrator or peace-maker. I remember one in which the two prominent actors were the first prefect of the junior study-hall, who belonged to the senior division, and a rather forward classmate of mine. From his seat in the rear of the hall the latter had shot a ball of tinfoil with unerring aim at the former's head. The boy, whose movements from beginning to end had been observed by the second prefect sitting in the rear of the room, was ordered to leave the room and to remain out for a week. After utilizing the Sixth Latin room as a study for about two days, the guilty student appealed to Father Tabb, who went at once to the prefect and asked him to accept the boy's apology and to allow him to return to the study-hall, as longer absence would lower his grade in conduct. It is superfluous to say that the petition was at once granted.

Some of the needy students often sought his financial assistance; they came to him for clothes or shoes, for medicine or carfare; in short, for anything they were in actual need of. Never to their plea did he turn a deaf ear, unless he himself did not have the money or could not borrow it from one of his friends. His resources, slender as they might be, were always theirs. Nobody ever learned from his lips whom he had befriended; his was the charity that keeps the left hand from knowing what the right hand does. Most of the money he received from the magazines which published his poems he gave to other persons. This is also true of the books he bought or received from friends; they never rested long on the shelves of his

small bookcase. Because he believed that the shelf was no place for books he handed them, after a close reading, to others to read. To meet the requests of poor students, according to the testimony of Rev. James P. Tower, of St. Charles', was Father Tabb's sole aim in publishing *Poems* of 1894. At another time the poet asked this same priest, who was then pastor of a country parish, whether any of his parishioners would guarantee him the sum of at least one hundred dollars a year in order that he might increase his benefactions. Unfortunately no one would do this.

These countless acts of kindness and love the students returned in their humble way. To him their gratitude was sufficient, but they took delight in serving him. Perhaps, after all, it was the kind of service that he permitted a student to render which indicated his place in the poet's esteem. A few of each generation of students were privileged to help with his correspondence and shopping and to read to him from his favorite periodicals, to hear long passages of beautiful poetry fall from his lips, or to receive special lessons in Greek or English. These were his intimates, who could always obtain admission to his room by using a prescribed rap on the door; not so fortunate were his less intimate friends. To the former were given those rare opportunities to learn more about the poet's life and personality which were denied to all but them. Among these are to be counted Rev. Daniel Connor, who possesses a book of dated manuscripts of priceless value and a copy of "*Poems*" annotated by the poet himself, and Rev. Waldo Hasenfus, to whom was entrusted some biographical material which he intends, I believe, to publish.

Father Tabb's relations with the faculty of St. Charles' College and St. Mary's Seminary were on the



whole, except during the last three years of his life, as pleasant as with the students. He visited them and they visited him. Those whom he favored more than the others were Rev. Edward R. Dyer, whose collection of cartoons and satiric and humorous letters and notes is the best I have seen; Rev. Michael F. Dinneen, who now laments the unexplained disappearance of valuable Tabbiana; and Rev. Charles D. Hogue, whose copy of the poet's first volume of poetry is filled with stray clippings that are of positive worth.

To certain members of the faculty, however, he entertained a natural antipathy that time seemed only to augment, like that for the priest who inspired *A Geographical Difficulty*.<sup>97</sup> Often there was a just cause for his position, as in the case of the Canadian priest who dared attempt to teach him what was English and what was not; or of the French priest who insisted upon converting his room, which adjoined the poet's, into a noisy workshop. Sometimes it was the result of some supposed slight, which his sensitive nature magnified beyond all hope of remedying, exemplified particularly in his mistaken interpretation of the faculty's attitude towards him in the last years of his life. Rather was his own extreme independence to blame. Then it was that he broke with every member of the faculty, among them some of his most devoted and beloved friends, Fathers Dyer, McKenny, and Dinneen. The only one to escape this mad scrapping of intimate associates was Father Hogue, and he attributes his preservation more to the fortunate circumstance of absence from the college at this period than to any other cause.

The hostile feelings he had for others were never concealed. They were universally known. The biting irony and sarcasm and satire of the words that fell

from his mouth or that were preserved in verse were sometimes enforced with an unrelenting hand in the somewhat Hogarthian cartoons that he drew of his victims. Neither layman nor priest nor bishop was given quarter. "Yet," he said sarcastically, "unless I loved my victims much, I could not attack them."

Outside the college he cultivated the friendship and acquaintance of many distinguished men and women. Certainly the earliest was with Sidney Lanier. In 1864, when they were both confined as blockade-runners in the Federal prison at Point Lookout, Maryland, they met for the first time and found in each other that consolation and hope which can come only from souls of kindred nature. The nobility and purity of Lanier's character appealed irresistibly to young Tabb and evoked expression in both prose and verse. A letter which I believe to be Father Tabb's contains a tribute worth quoting.<sup>98</sup>

"Late one evening I heard from our tent the clear sweet notes of a flute in the distance, and I was told that the player was a young man from Georgia who had just come among us. I forthwith hastened to find him out, and from that hour the flute of Sidney Lanier was our daily delight. It was an angel imprisoned with us to cheer and console us. Well I remember his improvisations and how the young artist stood there in the twilight. (It was his custom to stand while he played.) Many a stern eye moistened to hear him, many a homesick heart for a time forgot its captivity. The night sky, clear as a dewdrop above us, the waters of the Chesapeake far to the east, the long gray beach and the distant pines, seemed all to have found an interpreter in him.

"In all those dreary months of imprisonment, under the keenest privations of life, exposed to the daily manifestations of want and depravity, sickness and death, his was the clear-hearted, hopeful voice that sang what he uttered in after years."

"To realize," said Father Tabb in another letter to Charles Day Lanier, the oldest son of the poet,<sup>99</sup> "what our surroundings were, one must have lived in a prison camp. There was no room for pretense or disguise. Men appeared what they really were, noble or low-minded, pure or depraved; and there did one trait of your father's character single him out. In all our intercourse I can remember no conversation or word that an angel might not have uttered or listened to. Set this down in your memory. \* \* \* It will throw light upon other points, and prove the truth of Sir Galahad's words, "My strength is as the strength of ten, because my heart is pure."

After Tabb and Lanier had obtained their freedom, they enjoyed few personal meetings, but they maintained unabated their mutual love thru their affectionate letters. It is a matter of keen regret that probably all Lanier's letters to Father Tabb were burned in the fire that on March 16, 1911, destroyed old St. Charles' and that on account of Father Tabb's positive disapproval his letters to Lanier may not be printed.<sup>100</sup> The strangeness of this relationship is indicated in a letter from Mrs. Mary Day Lanier, the poet's wife, who writes,<sup>101</sup> "Father Tabb was so voiceless about himself! And he was not much with us. When he was, poetry, music, the children, his friend—his David—were his themes;" as well as in the last two verses of *The Captives*, written on April 7, 1893.

They lived and loved and died apart,  
But soul to soul and heart to heart.

Under this lyric in Father Connor's copy is the following note in the poet's own hand: "Suggested by a Point Lookout Prison experience, where I first heard Lanier's flute, before I met the player." So spiritual a friendship between two poetic souls was sure to disclose itself in song. Altho no reference to Tabb can be found in Lanier's poetry, the latter inspired Father Tabb to write *Ave Sidney Lanier, My Star, Love's Hybla, To Sidney Lanier, On The Forthcoming Volume of Lanier's Poems, In Touch, and At Lanier's Grave*, and moreover exerted a preceptible influence on his style.<sup>102</sup> No one can help feeling how deep and lasting was the priest's sorrow for the death of his friend, after reading the reflections written on All Souls' Day, 1892,

#### AT LANIER'S GRAVE

I stand beside a comrade tree  
That guards the spot where thou art laid;  
For since the light is lost to me  
I loiter in the shade.  
I lean upon the rugged stone  
As on the breast from whence I came,  
To learn 'tis not my heart alone  
That bears thy sacred name.<sup>103</sup>

A more elaborate and formal tribute was paid by the priest in the form of a sonnet which he read at the Johns Hopkins University on February 3, 1888, when a large company of Lanier's friends, including members of the faculty, musicians from the Peabody Institute of Music, and well-known men and women from Baltimore, Boston, New York, Princeton, and Ithaca, assembled to commemorate his forty-sixth

birthday. After a few words on his deep love for Lanier, which he declared to be like that of David for Jonathan, he read a beautiful and sympathetic tribute to the friend he never forgot.<sup>104</sup>

This occasion did not mark the first appearance of Father Tabb at the university. As a friend of some of the members of the faculty he was a frequent visitor to the old buildings on Howard Street from about 1880 until 1907. One of the present staff of librarians at Homewood remembers him as a patron of the old library when it was housed above the chemical laboratory.

The library, however, was not the chief attraction for the poet. He came principally to visit the man whom he loved more dearly than all others after his immediate family. His dearest friend, without doubt, was William Hand Browne. It is very probable that they were made acquainted with each other by Sidney Lanier, for the latter knew them both and was with Browne a member of a group of literary men that included, in addition to those already named, Vice-President Alexander H. Stephens, Colonel Richard Malcolm Johnston, Professor Thomas R. Price, and Professor Basil L. Gildersleeve. After he had met Browne, Father Tabb eventually came to know all the others intimately. It is safe to say, with Professor Browne's son, that his father and Father Tabb began their friendship sometime about 1870, and that their intimacy continued active and uninterrupted until the poet's death.

Nor is it at all strange that Father Tabb should have been drawn to Professor Browne. Different in religion tho they were, yet both were Southerners and of good lineage, and, moreover, were artistic and literary. Professor Browne,<sup>105</sup> who was born in Bal-



timore on December 31, 1828, commenced his literary career before the war by publishing *The Armourer* in *The South*, a local daily paper. After the war he became one of the principal agents in the restoration of cultural conditions in the South thru his connection with several literary periodicals. In 1866 he associated himself with Professor Albert T. Bledsoe in founding *The Southern Review* (New Series). Withdrawing after two volumes had been completed (1867 and 1868), he became in 1869 co-editor with Mr. Lawrence Turnbull of the *New Eclectic Magazine* published in Baltimore by Turnbull and Murdoch (Vol. 1, January-April, 1868). The name of this magazine was changed to *The Southern Magazine* (beginning with Vol. VIII) when the ownership passed from Turnbull and Murdoch to Murdoch, Brown, and Hill. Later, in 1873, the exclusive control was given to Turnbull Brothers, and the magazine was continued under the editorship of Browne until publication ceased in 1875 (Vol. XVII, July-December).

During this magazine period Professor Browne kept his eye on other more substantial types of writing. In 1873 he prepared with the help of Colonel Johnston a book entitled *English Literature*, a historical sketch of English literature from the earliest times, and again in 1878 a *Life of Alexander H. Stephens*. His literary activity continued unabated thruout his life, so that he has a long list of books to his credit.<sup>108</sup>

Professor Browne's literary nature was intensified and enriched by his artistic tastes and accomplishments, which consequently enhanced his influence upon the younger Tabb. A skilful performer, he often played the very flute Sidney Lanier used as a member of the famous Peabody Orchestra and bequeathed him at death. Besides his musical ability he enjoyed considerable facility with the brush, and many paintings

done by his hand are still hanging on the walls of his children's homes. There was no more versatile or cultured member of the Hopkins faculty than he, and such was the reputation he bore among his colleagues. When he died on December 13, 1912, he was genuinely mourned by the University as one of the most unselfish of men, a rich and charming personality, a scholar of extraordinary industry and liberal culture.

Such was Father Tabb's dearest friend. No wonder, then, that the poet did not heed the inconvenience of the tiring trip he used to make at least once a month, from the college to the university. This visit entailed a five and a half mile ride in a carriage from St. Charles' to Ellicott City, and a fifteen mile ride by train or trolley from Ellicott City to Howard Street. Nor did the visits either to his friend's office or home suffice the needs of their friendship. They were in continual correspondence, exchanging witticisms, verses on current events, criticism, and serious poems, either on post-cards or in letters. Nothing remains of his correspondence with Tabb except a Latin distich salvaged fortunately in a letter which Professor Browne wrote to Dr. Carroll V. Wight on returning a poem the latter had submitted for criticism. After a paragraph dealing with the specific manuscript, Professor Browne continued as follows:

"December 2, 1905.

I amuse myself and my good friend Father Tabb by sometimes putting an epigram of his into Latin. This is one:

Ad E. A. Poe

(Aula Famæ Loquitur)

Hic locus est tibi nullus: abi, divine poeta!

Mortuis, haud vivis, janua nostra patet.

Faithfully yours,

W. H. B."

Many of the letters, on the other hand, sent by the poet have been preserved by Professor Browne's daughter and yield glimpses of the intimacy that bound these two men together as well as of the nature of their correspondence. The opening sentence of the following letter breathes genuine friendship:

Berkeley Springs, Va.

July 29, 1905.

"Your card finds me here among strangers, and welcome is your greeting. You are always in my heart, and so often in my thoughts that I forget how long our silences last. Have you ever been to this quiet, old place? A glorious bath and this mountainous companionship make it to me at least singularly attractive."

Consideration for his friend's duties and engagements led the poet to express himself thus in a letter that is undated:

"My Friend — — will hand you this (manuscript of poems: *To Shelley, September Fruit, and Apple-Bloom*), dear Doctor, and knowing how busy you are just now, I beg that you will not acknowledge the receipt nor read the lines till you are perfectly free."

Sometimes Father Tabb, distrusting his own judgment, sent a poem to be criticized or renamed. He valued highly whatever suggestions or corrections were made. In this note, likewise without date, he says:

"Dear Doctor, please suggest, if you can, a better title for these lines (*The Vampire*) of which, I think, you have a copy. They are meant to be the words of a watcher by a *death-bed*. Are they really worth keeping?"

Evidently he had confidence in the taste of Doctor Browne's daughter-in-law, for the following letter indicates that he solicited her opinion on some humorous child verses:

"I am touched, dear Doctor, at your cordial letter, and with all my heart would come to you were the way clear. It would give me great pleasure to see those little children and to spend a night at Sherwood. \* \* \* May I bring along a new crop of child-verse to let you take home. I should like your new daughter—as she has the bump of fun—to tell me which she fancies."

One card bears a facetious announcement of the poet's intention to make an Easter call at the Browne home:

Dear friend;

If there come no  from Rome,

I shall  ble to your home,

The afternoon of Easter Sunday,  
Or on Monday.

J. B. J.,

What fun these two must have enjoyed in their own inimitable way! It was all genuine play for them, a re-

laxation from sterner duties, and they seem to have entered into it like children—whole-heartedly and simply. And beneath the surface of their play ran steadily the current of a deep and honorable friendship, a loyal confidence in each other that was never disturbed.

Next to William Hand Browne in the estimation of Father Tabb stood Alfred Curtis, born an Episcopalian July 4, 1831, and at his death, July 11, 1908, the Co-adjutor Bishop of Baltimore. They became fast friends in the years immediately following the Civil War, when Father Tabb was a young student for the Episcopal ministry and a teacher at old St. Paul's School, and Curtis the young rector of Mt. Calvary. Their friendship was deeply rooted in the common misgivings they shared with respect to the religion of their inheritance, and in the common solution that restored their peace of mind and sent them back to the old faith of England.

It cannot be doubted that the decision of Curtis, after his return from England, to enter the Catholic priesthood caused his friend to direct his reflections on a similar career. Curtis entered St. Mary's Seminary and Tabb, a few months later, St. Charles' College. When the former was ordained priest on December 19, 1874, he found his old friend awaiting his first absolution. Father Tabb never ceased to regard him affectionately as his soul's best guide and to look naturally to him as his counsellor in the hours of sorest trial when blindness was creeping upon him.

The poet was deeply distressed during the last illness of Bishop Curtis; so deeply, in fact, that he seems to have had a presentiment at the hour of death, according to the testimony of Father Haug, one of his colleagues. On the morning of July 11, 1908, at about quarter of seven, Father Tabb happened to meet him somewhere on the corridor of the third floor at old St.



Charles.' Visibly moved by grief, Father Tabb said simply, "Bishop Curtis has just died." Astonished, Father Haug inquired when he had learned the news. "I haven't heard it yet," he answered quietly, "but I feel it." A few hours later the college authorities were notified by telephone of the Bishop's death. A long letter written at this time to Professor Browne expressing the poet's sorrow is not decipherable in many passages. The following poem was written on July 9, two days before his friend died:

IN EXTREMIS  
BISHOP CURTIS

Lord, as from Thy body bleeding,  
Wave by wave is life receding  
From these limbs of mine.  
As it drifts away from me  
To the everlasting Sea,  
Blend it, Lord, with Thine.<sup>107</sup>

Many other friends did the poet-priest have, some among the clergy, others among the laity. I have elsewhere referred to some of the more prominent of the former. Nor shall I do much more than mention the more well known of the latter. The novelist Colonel Johnston used to entertain Father Tabb with other members of a literary circle that gathered at his old home in Waverly. But I believe relations were more or less severed after the appointment of William Hand Browne to the professorship of English literature at the Hopkins.

The world's most erudite and literary Greek scholar, Professor Basil L. Gildersleeve, who was introduced to the poet in the late eighties by Professor Browne, became a warm friend and admirer. Occasionally they dined together at the Hotel Rennert. In their correspondence they exchanged verses on contemporary

events and discussed questions of Greek grammar and syntax. Professor Gildersleeve once, on the feast of St. Pachomias, asked Father Tabb whether he was familiar with Greek patrology; and when he was answered in the negative, he remarked that an interesting story told of the saint could be found in Voltaire. Accordingly, Father Tabb consulted the reference and was so delighted with the story that he versified it and sent a copy to the professor.

Doctor James Wilson Bright, the pioneer of philological studies in America, at present Caroline Donovan Professor of English Literature at Johns Hopkins, became acquainted with Father Tabb thru his predecessor, Professor Browne. He remembers the priest as a frequent visitor in the office he shared with Professor Browne and as a genial man of original parts.

Professor Thomas R. Price, who succeeded Gildersleeve in the chair of Greek at the University of Virginia, remained a friend of Father Tabb's from the time of their first meeting during the war. Thru force of circumstances their friendship lacked those personal contacts which marked that with Browne, and was kept alive by occasional letters.

Another friend was Mr. Edwin Litchfield Turnbull, of Baltimore. Love of music and genuine ability in the art was the bond that united them. Mr. Turnbull, only a boy when he met the poet in 1887, was the editor of an amateur paper known as *The Acorn*.<sup>108</sup> His request for a contribution from his new acquaintance secured that exquisite poem *The Reaper*, which was particularly admired by Dr. Garnett, of the British Museum.

Tell me whither, maiden June,  
Down the dusky slope of noon  
With thy sickle of a moon,  
Goest thou to reap.

Fields of Fancy by the stream  
Of night in silvery silence gleam,  
To heap with many a harvest-dream  
The granary of Sleep.

Sometime in November, 1893, when the youthful editor had become an accomplished musician and was in Paris, he set the poem to music. A note from Father Connor reads as follows: "Father Tabb called one day at the Seminary and took me to the private concert in McCoy Hall, at which this and another song, *The Rose*, were sung. I remember his evident satisfaction with the way Mr. Turnbull had treated the above." The success he achieved with these songs encouraged the same musician to write the music for *One April Morn* and *Lullaby Town*. The lost poem, *Genevieve*, mentioned in a letter from Mr. Turnbull to Miss Jennie M. Tabb, I was unacquainted with until I discovered it among a collection of the former's songs. I do not think Father Tabb ever wrote a similar lyric; it is commonplace and unmetrical.<sup>109</sup>

To give the names of all the poet's friends would turn this chapter into a catalog. A sufficient number of the most prominent have been given to indicate the social and intellectual standing of those he honored with the name of friend. What joy it would give those who are now numbered among the departed to know how Father Tabb remembered them. If remembrance is the essence of friendship, then the poet's breviary bears the written record of his love. Here and there on the pages of the four volumes are inscribed the names of his friends, or inserted among the leaves are strips of paper preserving their names. They are recorded generally according to the date of birth or death, or their saint's day.<sup>110</sup> As he turned the pages in reading the sacred office he would breathe a prayer for the happiness of those he never wanted to forget.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE MAN

The published literary work of Father Tabb gives but an inadequate report of the man as he was. As far as it goes it pictures him accurately enough, but the picture is not at all complete and can be filled in only by those who knew him personally.

Physically he was a tall, thin man with strong features. His forehead was broad and high, his nose aquiline, with a humorous upper lip, his mouth straight and firm. His hair was scanty, his ears large, and his cheekbones high. His eyes were gray, and his eyelids usually red and scaly. His voice was thin and hoarse. His movements were awkward. Careless in dress, he wore a cassock until it was green with age and threadbare. Nothing about his exterior spoke of the beauty of the soul within. He was ugly, and, what is more, he boasted of his ugliness. One day, happening to encounter a stranger on the streets of Baltimore, he halted him and said laughingly: "How do you do, friend? Until I saw you I thought I was the *ugliest* man alive."<sup>111</sup>

His health, which was fairly good, was marred by insomnia. Many a sleepless night his weary body poured forth its cry for rest in verses that are painful to those who knew how often he was unable to sleep and how true was the story they record.

"Sleep quiets all but me,  
 A desert isle unsolaced by the sea—  
 A Tantalus denied  
 The draught wherewith all thirst is satisfied.<sup>112</sup>

The anguish of this protest is softened by the gentle child-like prayer uttered in the style of Blake's *Tiger*.

Am I the only child awake  
 Beneath thy midnight beams?  
 If so, for gentle Slumber's sake,  
 The brighter be their dreams!

But shouldst thou, travelling the deep,  
 The silent angel see  
 That puts the little ones to sleep,  
 Bright star, remember me.<sup>113</sup>

Even tho his request is unanswered, he resigns himself to his lot, as in

#### INSOMNIA

E'en this, Lord, didst thou bless—  
 This pain of sleeplessness—  
 The live-long night,  
 Urging God's gentlest angel from thy side,  
 That anguish only might with thee abide  
 Until the light.  
 Yet, e'en the last and best,  
 Thy victory and rest,  
 Came unto thee;  
 For 'twas while others calmly slept around,  
 That thou alone in sleeplessness was found,  
 To comfort me.<sup>114</sup>

On such trying nights as these last three verses imply he would go to the little gallery chapel near his room on the third floor of old St. Charles' and seek relief in prayer and meditation.

Altho he had been denied the gifts of physical beauty and perfect health, his other natural endowments were



of the highest order. The keenness of his mind is written indelibly in the fine perceptions of his poetry; his ability to conceive original thoughts and to pack them closely in a few lines and generally in simple diction is one of the chief literary distinctions which he shares with no other poet in American literature except Emerson. This distinction has recently been recognized by the editor of the volume of *Epigrams* published by the Oxford University Press in the Oxford Garland Series. Tabb and Emerson are the only Americans to find place therein. To discover the large philosophy in his little poems<sup>115</sup> is the surest method of appreciating the power and fertility of his mind. His range of thought too is wide. How can I characterize it more aptly than by the felicitous phrase made in reply to my inquiry on this subject by that scholar of scholars, Professor Basil L. Gildersleeve, who said, "His range is from Rabelais to Dante." At first sight this may seem an extravagant judgement, but the truth of it becomes more and more apparent as longer acquaintance with Father Tabb's work begets deeper knowledge. With respect to his power to provoke thought in others, the words of Professor Killis Campbell, one of the foremost of Poe scholars, are to the point: "Tabb is not easy reading; he is a poet, like Browning—or most other *real* poets, for that matter—who needs to be pondered over."<sup>116</sup>

His ability as a musician makes one wonder whether he could not, had he so determined, have attained as much fame in the musical world as in the literary, for his gifts in this respect were not of the ordinary kind and had been earnestly cultivated since childhood. Even after he had decided to pursue a career other than musical, music continued his favorite diversion. He thor-

oly enjoyed playing the piano both for his own pleasure and for all who were appreciative. The memory of those hours when he sat at the piano in the old Recreation Hall playing Chopin as only an artist can interpret a brother artist is cherished by his students. Chopin, chief exponent of the romantic school in music, more than any other composer appealed to him, perhaps because he found in his interpretation of Chopin a revelation of his own personality. It was this instinctive ability to interpret music that was his forte and that distinguished him from others with equal technical skill. Once when one of his colleagues, who had purchased a pianola, was putting thru the Sanctus from Gounod's St. Cecilia's Mass, Father Tabb chanced to hear it and rushed to interrupt him. "Take this thing away," he said, "and let me show you how to play it. That's murder."<sup>17</sup> On another occasion he put different words to a version of *The Earl King*, one of his favorite songs, which a classmate of mine was to sing at a recital, because they did not adequately express the theme.

As a cartoonist he was also skilful. The many pen and ink sketches on all sorts of persons and topics extant today give positive evidence of another artistic capacity than those already considered. Unfortunately most of these cannot be reproduced on account of their personal nature. Certainly, however, the sketch he was most proud of was of himself, for he never tired of drawing it on the blackboard or on stray bits of paper, and he even had a student's father, who was an engraver, make a plate of it together with the following verses, so that he could send printed copies to his friends:

"This is the Catholic priest  
Who in piety never increased.  
With the world and the devil  
He kept on a level,  
Tho' from *flesh* he was wholly released."

Imagine the average college professor, if you can, sending about caricatures of himself! The face and figure of his subjects were strikingly like the originals. Some of the illustrations in *Quips and Quiddits* were first sketched by him.

His memory was remarkable for its scope and tenacity. How many lines he had at his command can never be computed, but he seemed to have committed to memory all the best work of his favorite poets, and, to borrow a phrase which the late William James employed to characterize a good teacher, to have them always on tap. One day in the spring of 1909, after I had finished reading to him Francis Thompson's essay on Shelley, a copy of which had been sent to him by his friend, the late Mrs. Meynell, he said to me: "I want to find out how much of the *Ancient Mariner* I remember; I shall send for a copy of the poem so that you can follow as I recite it." When a few days later a Riverside edition came, he sent for me, and, as soon as I was seated, book in hand, to verify the recital, he began the poem in his own inimitable way. I was close enough to him to fill the role of the wedding guest. His realistic interpretation of the meeting between the mariner and the guest, I confess, frightened me. With the long, thin fingers of his bony hand, he touched my shoulders at the words

"He holds him with his skinny hand"

and he gazed at me with sightless orbs much in the uncanny manner of the mariner, as he continued—

"He holds him with his glittering eye—  
The wedding guest stood still."

After he had completed three cantos without requiring a single prompting, he asked me to come back on the following day to hear the other four. Imagine my surprise the next afternoon when he reached the last verse without failing to recall one of the six hundred and twenty-five verses of the poem. No artistic delight has ever equalled that which his interpretation of Coleridge's masterpiece brought to me. After a few words of glowing eulogy on the poem, he presented the book to me with the remark: "Never cease reading the *Ancient Mariner*; it is genuine poetry."<sup>118</sup> Moreover, if he had not had this retentive memory, he probably would not have been able to say Mass during the last two years of his life. Not once, it is reported, during that time when he was saying, by special indult, the Masses of the Blessed Virgin and the Dead did his memory fail him.<sup>119</sup>

Rate a man's natural endowments as high as you will, nothing seems to recommend a man to most people so readily as a sense of humor—a quality that apparently redeems all faults and eccentricities. To say that Father Tabb's measure of wit and humor was filled to the brim and overflowing is to repeat what is common knowledge. Hardly anyone has written about him or his poetry without telling at least one story in which he played a prominent part. Some time ago when I printed a few of his unpublished poems,<sup>120</sup> I felt constrained to include several that were humorous for the simple reason that they seemed necessary to present the real Tabb. Whenever students of the old college meet nowadays, invariably their conversation turns to exchanging stories of his witty verses and rejoinders.

A confirmed punster, he never allowed an opportunity to pass for making a pun. How masterly he could use a combination of puns and irony is best illustrated by an incident of 1899, which is recorded in a letter to Professor Browne, dated January 24:

"I hope, dear Doctor, that unlike myself you have resisted the charms of La Grippe. She caught me last week and has just let me go; but she does not yet suffer me ought of her sight.

"I think I told you of Mr. Dobson's lines in the current *Bookman*; if not, here they are:

I wonder when America will know  
That much her greatest bard is Poe?  
I say this reminiscent and defiant  
Of Baker, Tabb, Longfellow, and Bryant.<sup>121</sup>

I have offered the following *Reply and Explanation*:

#### REPLY

To Mr. Austin Dobson—

Dear Sir:

It is a cruel stab  
With Edgar Poe to measure Tabb:  
As well with Tennyson to rate  
The present Poet Laureate.<sup>121</sup>

#### EXPLANATION

'Tis evident that such a name  
As mine to Mr. Dobson came,  
Like Cinderella's shoe—it fit  
The foot; so, on he buckled it.

Always affectionately yours."

*Reply* appeared in the *Bookman* for February, 1899, prefaced by this note from the editor:



"We desire to say that the perpetrator of the lines recently written in a copy of the works of Poe and quoted in this place last month was not the unoffending Mr. Dobson, but the facetious Mr. Andrew Lang. Meantime, these lines have been provocative of the following communication from Father Tabb, whose name, it will be remembered, was linked with those of Baker, Longfellow, and Bryant."

*Explanation* was published in the *Critic*<sup>122</sup> with the following note:

"The February *Bookman*," writes Father Tabb, "says it was not Mr. Dobson, but Mr. Andrew Lang that so dwarfed me by Poe. The same writer once dropped a *b* from my name, and when I protested, very kindly replied, 'I took you for an English Bard; I am a Scotch Reviewer.' For his last cut I offer the following *Explanation*."

The dropping of the *b* referred to here is the subject of the fifth poem in *Quips and Quiddits*, entitled *To Mr. Andrew Lang, Who Spelled My Name 'Tab.'*

O why should Old Lang Sign  
 A compliment to me  
 (If it, indeed, is mine),  
 And filch my final b?  
 To him, as to the Dane  
 In his soliloquy,  
 This question comes again—  
 "2 b or not 2 b?"

In another letter to Professor Browne he enclosed the quatrain *An Incongruity* with the explanation that a certain "Father Pouch is reported to have received two converts—a clergyman and his wife—into the Church.

As they have safely reached the Church,  
 It seems a thing to smile at  
 That, to direct them in the search,  
 We had a Pouch-as Pilot.

When Father Dyer, the president of St. Mary's Seminary, was about to make an official visitation to the Sulpician seminary at Menlo Park, California, Father Tabb wrote this elaborate conceit, the same method being used as in his nature poetry, to tell

WHY THE JOURNEY IS MADE  
 'Tis not with *gold*, I hear,  
 The Wise Man starts to Frisco!  
 But, haply, to *demur*  
 If matters there amiss go;  
 And, if *incensed*, to stir  
 With *direst* threats—"obispo."<sup>123</sup>

One of the cereals frequently served for breakfast at the college was Force. About this he wrote

To *coax* the appetite was thought  
 To be the natural course,  
 But many people now-a-days  
 Are recommending *Force*.

A manicure set, which was sent by one of his students, Joe McMahon, to his sister, occasioned these verses:

A *girl*-I-cure, not *man*-I-cure,  
 The present should have been.  
     But Joe is nice  
     As Father Price  
 About a taint of sin,  
 And *modesty* forbade, I'm sure,  
 A gift so *feminine*.<sup>124</sup>

His dislike for mathematics found relief in the quatrain written in Father McGuigan's copy of *Poems*

under *The Ring*, which, in a note in Father Connor's copy, he says, "is the only geometrical conception I was ever capable of."

Suspended o'er Geometry,  
 I am a fish-worm<sup>125</sup> dangling—  
 A creature too obtuse to see  
 What is acute in angling.

His cleverness in the use of words is well illustrated in the skilful retort made to a friend, Dr. Robert F. Williams, of Richmond, who penned the following versified letter:

#### TO FATHER TABB

My Presbyterian friend, G. B.,  
 Comes round and looks askance at me  
 When I am drinking eau de vie.  
 I feel ashamed.  
 But if he knows a goodly priest  
 Whom he reveres, drinks, too, at least  
 He'll think me not so great a beast;  
 I'll be less blamed.

Hence this from me to thee is sent,  
 And if you'll drink it as 'tis meant,  
 Yourself alone, I'll be content,  
 Ask no reward.  
 And maybe I'll induce G. B.  
 To take a sip for you with me,  
 So that in spirit we'll be three  
 In one accord.

And, like true men, we will maintain  
 That God's best gift to man is grain;  
 Ask benisons on sun and rain  
 That made the rye  
 From which the Paul Jones was distilled;  
 Ask that its maker's cup be filled,  
 That none from yours and mine be spilled.  
 Good friend, goodbye.

To this Father Tabb replied in kind:

KEEP YOUR RYE OPEN

No man, dear doctor, can deny  
 Your rhymes are worthy of your Rye.  
 And this to me  
 Is what in spirits best I find—  
 Or in a jug, or in mankind—  
 Viz., Pure-Rye-ty.

Some of his puns, it must be admitted, were forced, over-ingenious displays of wit. This is the reason why some of the poems in *Child Verse* are beyond the child mind. A card<sup>126</sup> to Professor Browne carried one of these outrageous specimens:

THE FRISKING LAMB

Tho' gay its life in fact and fable,  
 In death its fate is in lamb-on-table.

Even if he had to resort to a foreign language in order to make connections, he would have his pun, a case in point being the unpublished *Piece of Presumption*:

Asked a possum of a canner  
 In his most seductive manner,  
 "Can you take me in, old man?"  
 He replied, "Possum, I can."

It was almost impossible to meet Father Tabb unprepared with some new verses, inspired frequently by contemporary political or economic events. One day an old schoolmate, Dr. Joseph W. Eggleston, met him on Franklin Street in Baltimore and said, "Hello, Johnny, what's the latest?"

"The Delaware lynching," answered he. "By the way, when does your book appear?"

"This month," replied Dr. Eggleston. "Why don't you write one, John?"

"That's not in my line; I can only sneeze."

"Well, what is the latest sneeze?"

"*The Beecher Beached*, and this is the way it goes:

Were Harriet Beecher well aware  
Of what was done in Delaware,  
Of that unwholesome smellaware,  
She'd make all heaven or hell aware,  
And ask John Brown to tell her where  
Henceforth she best might sell her ware."

Two other stories showing the quality of his repartee are told by his niece.<sup>127</sup> In his younger days Father Tabb attended the funeral of an old gentleman who was known to have led rather a wild life; this was before the use of the padded top to the casket, and to avoid the hollow sound of the clods falling into the open grave a quantity of shavings was placed upon the top of the case. Someone standing behind him leaned over his shoulder and whispered: "Mr. Tabb, what's all that they're putting in?" Without an instant's hesitation or the least change of expression, he replied: "Kindling!"

Upon another occasion he was visiting a friend in a hospital. A patient was to be operated on, but was anxious to see a priest before being taken to the operating room. Knowing that Father Tabb was in the house, one of the physicians asked if he would be willing to see the lady. He said that certainly he would do whatever he could and that he thought it most fitting "that the old lady be opened with prayer."

Most biographers of Father Tabb have failed to portray the man as he was not because they did not know his mental qualities sufficiently well, but chiefly because they had no intimate acquaintance with his com-



plex intellectual and moral constitution. He was independent in his opinions and habits; yet in matters of religion none was more submissive to the mind of the church than he. He was humble, altho there was much vanity in his nature. He was a man of strong likes and dislikes; he could hate as warmly as he could love. Because I know the extreme difficulty of the task I have in hand I approach it with caution and diffidence.

A deeply religious man, he looked out upon the world and the universe from the solitude of his own serene life with eyes that saw behind all an infinite and beneficent God who had sent His own Son to redeem fallen man and to establish the Catholic Church to perpetuate the fruits of the redemption, and with a heart that felt Love to be the sovereign remedy for all ills. Altho God revealed Himself to him most personally thru the medium of external nature, there was no pantheism in his romantic attitude. God is a personality with all the attributes of personality; Nature is his garment. This idea he expresses in

#### CONTACT

The universe is but the lordly hem  
Of God's outflowing garment; and to them  
That touch in faith its mysteries reveal  
A sacrament each mortal wound to heal.

The place that he assigns Love in his philosophy definitely classes him with the romanticists:

For Reason and the rays thereof  
Are starlight to the noon of Love. (L. L., p. 106)

Earth is not sufficient for man; true happiness, or tranquillity, as the Epicureans called it, can be enjoyed, as St. Augustine says, only in God.

Who cleaveth to the earth, as thou,  
 Ne'er knows tranquillity;  
 Naught pulses in my bosom wide  
 But God, whose own am I. (L., p. 41)

Man is like the sea-bubble—both are “kindred blossoms—

Time-blooms on eternity,” (L., p. 44)

but he lives forever after death, as he says in a lyric written during his father's last illness:

“Child of the humble sod,  
 Wed with the breath of God,  
 Descend! for with the lowest thou must lie—  
 Arise! thou hast inherited the sky.” (P., p. 3)

Altho life has its disconcerting mysteries and at times the doubts that assail all thinking men and women could elicit such a cry as

“My life is but a leaf upon the tree;  
 The winds of birth and death upon it blow;  
 But whence it came and whither it shall go,  
 Is mystery of mysteries to me,” (P., p. 74)

yet his deep and abiding faith triumphs in the assertion

“Whate'er my darkness be,  
 'Tis not, O Lord, of Thee;  
 The light is Thine alone;  
 The shadows, all my own.” (L., p. 128)

and achieves literary permanence in that exquisite poetic definition of

#### FAITH

In every seed to breathe the flower,  
 In every drop of dew  
 To reverence a cloistered star  
 Within the distant blue;

To wait the promise of the bow,  
 Despite the cloud between,  
 Is Faith—the fervid evidence  
 Of loveliness unseen. (L. L., p. 100)

Man is by his very nature compelled to seek refuge  
 in Christ, according to the thought of

#### PROMONTORY

Not all the range of sea-born liberty  
 Hath ever for one restless wave sufficed:  
 So pants the heart—of all compulsion free—  
 Self-driven to the Rock, its barrier, Christ.  
 (P., p. 141)

It is not then to be wondered at that the theme of  
 Love, for God is Love, is never long absent from his  
 poems. Disregarding those lyrics expressive of per-  
 sonal feeling, consider his love for mankind as reflected  
 in his verse

“O that, all strife above,  
 Strong in the strength thereof,  
 Man evermore  
 Built, with a broader span,  
 Love for his fellow-man  
 From shore to shore! (L., p. 13)

This was the prayer he uttered from the bottom of  
 his heart. *To The Christ,*

Thou hast on earth a Trinity—  
 Thyself, my fellow-man, and me;  
 When one with him, then one with Thee;  
 Nor, save together, Thine are we, (P., p. 89)

which was “especially commended by old Dr. Furness,”  
 presents the religious principle involved in his love for  
 his fellow-man. Not even the great gulf between the  
 perfect life above and that on earth with its sorrows  
 and sin could keep him from believing that

E'en the calm of heaven were less  
Untouched of human tenderness. (P., p. 22)

This last word recalls one of the most appealing traits of his character. He was unbelievably tender for a man. I know of no poet who has so successfully adopted the woman's point of view in treating the themes of birth and babyhood. *Missing, Our First-Born, To Her Three Days' Child, Baby's Dimples, A Bunch of Roses, Confided, "Chanticleer,"* and *A Cradle Song* illustrate this womanly sympathy and tenderness admirably. His devotion to his sister Hattie, a partial paralytic, led him to do everything in his power to make her comfortable. He supported her and spent much time each summer with her. In a letter to M. S. Pine he writes as follows: "My vacation was, for the most part, spent at my sister's bedside. She is a partial paralytic, and so helpless that she cannot stand alone. The summer is always most trying for her; so, except when I went to the Springs for my eyes, every vacation has been spent with her at home."<sup>128</sup>

Purity of life usually accompanies tenderness. In the case of Father Tabb, he taught what he practiced, that no virtue was so important for all the others as chastity.

He cloistered here a virgin Thought—  
His vow of Chastity,  
Whereto from year to year he brought  
First-fruit of victory.  
And here, his latest battle won  
Beneath her panoply,  
In death returns the champion  
Within her walls to lie. (L. L., p. 64)

In addition to Scriptural teachings and examples, he was wont to cite such lines as "Who buys a minute's mirth to wail a week?" or the unforgettable stanza from

*The Ancient Mariner* beginning "Her lips were red, her looks were free," or Keats' *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*. The futility of the hedonistic philosophy of old Greece, echoed in the modern songs of Herrick, whom in many respects he resembles, is declared in no uncertain terms in the sextet,

TO AN OLD WASSAIL-CUP

Where Youth and Laughter lingered long  
 To quaff delight, with wanton song  
     And warm caress,  
 Now, Time and Silence strive amain  
 With lips unsatisfied, to drain  
     Life's emptiness! (P., p. 46)

Sometimes, however, it must be admitted his remarks were slightly suggestive and his doggerel verse built on some vulgar pun or illustration, but the attitude was invariably mental, comparable, for instance, to that of pagan Martial. Some who read this chapter will recall his verses on *Slom-kow-ski*, *Pisani*, *Je-re-mi-as* (Hallisey), (the Bible History without a word on) *Balam's ass*, *J. B. Tabb*, *A. B.*, and the famous version of Voltaire's story of *St. Pachomias*, suggested to him by his friend Professor Gildersleeve. Others who were more intimate with him will recognize his hand in such titles, even if they are not acquainted specifically with the verses, as *Doc's Monopoly*, *Inscription for the Restaurant at the Catholic University*, *Obituary*, *Inducements of Rival Seminaries*, *An Epitaph on Kroll*, *A Beastly Bull*, and *Food for Reflection*. Two prose pieces, which belong to this category, *A Meditation of Bishop Ireland* and *A Meditation on the Good Samaritan*, give proof of his thoro mastery of the satiric manner.<sup>129</sup>

The deliberation of his procedure in such pieces as these indicates what perhaps many of his friends con-



sider his dominant characteristic. He was altogether unconcerned as to what people thought of these choice bits. They expressed exactly what was in his mind and therefore he was satisfied. Independence! The very word thrilled him. It may be that he cherished it as a sort of compensation for all that he had lost with the Lost Cause. If he honestly believed something about a person he did not hesitate to say it openly in prose or verse or cartoon. On the walls of the Westmoreland Club in Richmond used to hang his sketch<sup>130</sup> of a member of the faculty of St. Charles' whom he heartily disliked, and *Quips and Quiddits* carries a disguised caricature of the same subject under the quatrain *Facial Latitude*. Here are his comments on another member of the faculty which were sent with "love and Christmas greetings of a fellow-sufferer" to Father Dyer:

## IN HELL

"Pere — — —'s dead! Ah, it is well;  
He'll never worry us in hell!"

## IN PURGATORY

"His sins were long ago forgiven;  
So let him pass *at once* to heaven."

## IN HEAVEN

"He did God's will by night and day,  
But always in the devil's way."

## ON EARTH

"'Twould lessen joy or deepen woe,  
If where *he* went *we'd* have to go."

*St. Austin's Perplexity*, an unpublished piece, was inspired by another colleague who is still living.

Teaching in a college attended mostly by Northerners he boldly proclaimed himself a Southerner and retained his Southern prejudice in all political and social

questions. A fellow-student of mine named Barrett, who had invited Father Tabb to visit him at his home in Lincoln, Nebraska, received this characteristic declination:

“Who would think on  
A Rebel with Loncoln?  
Or venture to ask a  
Or venture to Nebraska!  
Another might dare it,  
But I cannot, Barrett,  
Though truly to thee  
A friend, J. B. T.<sup>131</sup>

His irrevocable position is set forth without qualification of any kind in this quatrain which circulated about the old college:

#### DOING WELL

I'll be hanged if you haven't done well  
To hang up a rebel who likes to rebel;  
But whether you send me to heaven or hell,  
An unredeemed rebel I'll faithfully dwell.

The late Theodore Roosevelt's attitude on the negro question, which unloosed his ire beyond control, occasioned these two “political effusions” to Father Dyer:

#### “VARIETY IS THE SPICE OF LIFE”

Contrasts are striking, Teddy knows;  
And so, for a variety,  
The Black man to the White House goes,  
Rough-riding o'er society.  
We wonder how “the spice of life”  
Impressed the *daughter* and the *wife*.

#### A SECOND-TERM SCENTED

We wonder much how Roose-felt  
When Booker Washington he smelt;  
And if he lives in expectation  
Of a new in-nigger-ation.

No better illustration of his independent spirit, unbroken to his last breath, can be offered than an incident of his death-bed. Having received the last rites of the Church, he was peacefully awaiting the end. Now it happened that a very nervous and scrupulous priest, Father Charles Judge, the brother of the famous Jesuit missionary to Alaska, asked him several times afterwards whether he wanted to go to confession. Exasperated finally by this repeated annoyance, he blurted out the question, "How many times do you want a man to confess, anyway?"

Coupled with this independence was a strange mixture of touching humility and strong pride that was inborn, the heritage of generations of Virginian landowners. There was no snobbery about his pride, for no man had greater sympathy for his fellow-man, and no Virginian ever referred less to his family than he. He liked the simple title "Father" Tabb and was content to live almost a monastic life. His room was bare of all but necessities: a bed, two chairs and a rocker, a wash-stand, a wardrobe, a plain table, and a bookcase with a few books were all the furniture it contained. He paid little attention to his dress or appearance. He was free from all inordinate attachments to worldly things: honors and riches lured him not at all. When, as I infer from a paper found in Father Connor's book of manuscripts, he was invited to join the Phi Beta Kappa Society, Alpha Chapter of Virginia, as "a person other than a graduate of William and Mary College who was distinguished in Letters, Science, and Education," he evidently declined the honor, for no record exists to the contrary. Is there better evidence for his humility than the themes of his poetry? Does he revel in the contemplation of the mighty ocean or

the towering mountain, or does he find most exquisite delight in the lowly dandelion and the shrinking violet, the scent of the rose and the song of the thrush. From such humble things as these, and the seed, the dew, the clover, the fern, and the snowdrop, comes the bewitching melody of his song.

What pride he had was in a sense the outcome of genuine humility, which is nothing else than a just knowledge of one's self. He was aware of his limitations in certain fields of endeavor, such as mathematics, altho his lack of knowledge of this science was the result of a lack of interest and not of incapacity, and avoided them. On the other hand, he was conscious of his proficiency in other fields and cultivated them assiduously. If he expected a compliment for a cartoon he had drawn or a bon mot that had flashed into his mind because he considered it good, he was usually right in both his judgement and expectation. He took pride in everything he did and showed this pride in his manner.

With respect to his poetry he was as vain as any woman could be of her beauty. He was always, according to Father Hogue, anxious about the reception the critics were going to give his volumes when they appeared, and several letters to Professor Browne support this statement. Adverse criticism disheartened him, but only for a short while; favorable reviews, on the other hand, brought him such expansive delight that he wanted to shout the good news to the four quarters of the earth.

Another manifestation of his pride was his obstinacy in refusing often to see a different point-of-view from his own or to revise his opinion concerning a person who he thought had done him an injury or whom he instinctively disliked. Many a student fell a victim

(not in the classroom, however) to some caprice or mood which permanently severed all friendly relations. Together with this stubbornness went one of his most objectionable qualities—vindictiveness. If he was as tender as a woman, he was also as vindictive; and no woman ever pursued the object of her dislike more relentlessly. Giving no quarter, he wielded his weapons—satire and caricature—with the dexterity of Pope and Hogarth. To appreciate fully the following satire, one must have known the characters involved.

## A TABB-LOW

(A duet by two who can't do it—D———and B——)

"Tabb's dead! and we who always keep  
The Rule of Silence when we *sleep*,  
Agreed, for his detested sake,  
To keep it sometimes when *awake*,  
So that his students all might see  
What lofty scorn of him had we."

D. "Go now, and get your 'little ting,'  
And we shall both *Te Deum* sing."

B. "Te Deum!"

D. "Hush! The chant you spoil  
And mispronounce the second *voil*.  
Tee *Dyum* you should say, like me."

B. "Now den, you don't know "Fa" from "Si'."

D. "Ah, B—— —, keep your temper, do,  
Or Silence I shall keep with you.  
Look there! I'll take my solemn oath  
Tabb's body's grinning at us both."

One of these men is the subject of this quatrain:

Tho' fit for heaven, he did not need  
To be a *child* again,  
For such by birth he was, indeed,  
And *always did remain*.



The contrasts evident in the portrait that is almost completed suggest that the subject must have been an eccentric person. As a matter of fact, the completion of the portrait depends on exhibiting some of his distinctive eccentricities. The common practice of appealing to artistic temperament as the most satisfactory explanation for the odd actions of men of genius has much to recommend it. At least it saves probing after more specific causes. In one mood he could publish in the daily press<sup>182</sup> this warning:

“A project is afoot to expose me to the public in the *Series of Southern Writers*.

Nothing could be much more distasteful to me, and should any friend of mine be tempted to undertake it, let him know that a blind man’s malediction is the penalty.

J. B. T.”

And in another mood he could willingly correct the sketch of his own life written by his dearest friend, Professor Browne, and in a personal note commend it as follows:

“March 27, 1909.

Your card and postal received. Thank you for them both. Your name to the work is what I shall value most. The following was born last night. (Then is found the poem, *My Birthchamber*.)”

He would not receive two persons at the same time, even tho both were friends of long standing. Interrogated as to the reason for this, he said: “Even if Christ were to visit me with His own Mother, I would tell them, ‘No! not both together, but one at a time’.”

He was averse to saying good-bye to anyone. At the college it was the custom for the students on the eve of

departure for their vacations to make the rounds of the faculty and bid them farewell, but there was one room, and one room only, that they avoided. And this was the only time during the year that his door was bolted against the students. When the hour came for them to leave in the old four-horse buses that used to carry a merry crowd of laughing, singing collegians down the historic Frederick Pike to Ellicott City, Father Tabb was nowhere to be found. On St. Charles' Day, when the college celebrates the feast of its patron saint and many alumni flock back—an occasion most men welcome to renew old acquaintances—he was sure to be absent, perhaps in Baltimore with Professor Browne. Professor Barrett Wendell, of Columbia University, an ardent admirer of his, who asked that he be allowed to visit him, was told frankly, "If you come, I will not see you." He would visit his friends, but he would not be visited.

Other stories to the point have been told before, but they are worth repeating. "One day he was particularly requested to be on hand to help entertain four bishops who were hourly expected. The smile on his face could not be misinterpreted. He was soon out of sight down in his beloved haunts in the woods, where he spent the day. As the whistle told him late in the afternoon that the guests had departed, he sauntered back to the college. On the way one of the faculty met him and asked: "Why didn't you stay and see the bishops?" "I didn't want to see my forefathers," was the witty rejoinder.<sup>133</sup> Invited to attend the ceremony of laying the corner-stone of Monsignor Mackin's church in Washington, which was called St. Paul's, he sent this reply:

St. Peter is the cornerstone;  
And if you build on Paul,  
I greatly fear  
Ere many a year  
Your church is doomed to fall.

So, pray excuse, if I refuse<sup>134</sup>  
To heed your invitation,  
And have no heart  
To take a part  
In such a Mackination.

Such was the Tabb of fact, the Tabb revealed to his contemporaries in everyday life. A complex personality, he was a blend of qualities often the very opposite of each other, so that to some he seemed vain, unreasonable, vindictive, hypercritical, even vulgar; and to others humble, considerate, sympathetic, generous to a fault, and noble. Scarcely more than a half dozen of his friends, I dare say, saw him in all these roles, but they all knew him intimately enough to style him Tabb the eccentric, Tabb the unique.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE AUTHOR

It is a matter of general interest to point out, as I have done in other chapters, whatever striking idiosyncrasies the subject of a biography manifested in his relations and dealings with other men and women. It is, moreover, a matter of particular interest to note, when the subject of the biography happens to be a poet, whatever is singular about the manner of his composition. Did he write only a few verses a day and polish and refine these until they were perfect, as Vergil said he did? Or did he find his inspiration in the mouse or the daisy in the fields and compose his songs behind the plow as he drove it thru the hard ground, like Robert Burns? Or did he resort to laudanum and opium for such fantastic dream-creations as in their waking hours Coleridge and De Quincey and Poe evolved into poetry and poetic prose? Such details of a poet's art, which have always been recorded, have a peculiar fascination. To say that Father Tabb's manner of composition was marked by the strange and odd is only to say that this is another manifestation of the fundamental quality of his character.

One day during a conversation with Father Hogue, who was closest of all the members of the faculty to Father Tabb, he called my attention to two characteristic peculiarities of the poet's manner of composition:

first, the conception of the idea and the physical signs of this; and second, the finished expression of the idea in verse. It was a frequent occurrence for Father Tabb, while walking about the campus or thru the woods and fields or by the side of some stream, to come to a sudden stop, throw his head backward, and, looking with fixed gaze at the sky, apparently (for two or three minutes) lose consciousness of his surroundings. This habit of his was known to the students as well as to the faculty and was respected as something not to be ridiculed or interrupted. Whenever he was seen in this attitude, he was known to be "at work." These experiences must have resembled vision or some similar exalted mental state, for the product was, invariably, a finished poem. The whole mental process must have been so intense and vivid and complete that the outcome of necessity was the short and perfect and finished poem that has come to be associated with his name. Rarely did Father Tabb improve on what he had first written. He often spoke of these flashes of thought and maintained that he could not write to order, but that he had to wait for the inspiration of the moment.<sup>135</sup> He read his own experience into his definition of poetry in the quatrain

#### POETRY

A gleam of heaven; the passion of a star  
Held captive in the clasp of harmony;  
A silence, shell-like, breathing from afar,  
The rapture of the deep—eternity. (P., p. 136)

All this is clearly confirmed by an examination of his longer poems. Every one of them contains beautiful verses and genuine poetic thought, but every one goes to pieces, in point of structure or sustained inspiration,



before the end. He evidently recognized this failure in the volume of 1882, and altho he never published anything thereafter so pretentious as *The Rhyme of the Rock*, he tried hard to master the difficulty, but without success. He sent a long detective story to one of the magazines, but it was returned as unsatisfactory. The plot, according to Father Hogue, was exceedingly ingenious, but poorly worked out. Additional evidence for these flashes of thought is to be found in the abrupt pause that he would sometimes make in a conversation in order to introduce something in verse, not always prompted by the subject under discussion. I recall such an incident in my own experience. One afternoon as I was sitting in the chair by the side of his desk, he broke off the conversation without warning and fell into a silence which lasted about two minutes. The next words I heard were, "Take a piece of paper and write this." He then dictated two stanzas which he called "*Vox Dei*."<sup>136</sup> He allowed me to keep a copy, but he never published the poem. A proof of the peculiar finished state of his original composition is furnished by the fact, witnessed by several of his friends and his own words, that he rarely changed more than a word of the first draft of his best work.

His manuscripts were extraordinarily clean. I have discovered few serious variants in text, altho variants in titles are more numerous, in comparing the manuscripts of the Tabb Album with the published poems. More variants, however, occur in the Connor manuscript.

Even if these flashes of thought, these inspirational moments, were brief, we have cause to rejoice that they were many. Father Tabb's literary work extends over a long stretch of years, and it is marked thruout by

the same high quality of inspiration and execution, so that it cannot be said that he sang his best songs at the beginning, or in the middle, or at the end of his career.<sup>137</sup> Exactly when he wrote his first poem I cannot say, but the earliest I have found are preserved in a class-book which belonged to the late Monsignor James F. Donahoe, a member of the graduating class of 1877 of St. Charles'. This book contains a collection of miscellanies in prose and verse written by his fellow-students, among which are the following poems: *A Visit to the Blessed Sacrament on the Eve of the Epiphany*, *Adieu*, *The Cloud* (substantially identical with the printed form), *Christ's Little Sister*, *The Bellman*, and *The Outcast*.

None of these is written in the poet's own hand, but all are attributed by the copyist to "John B. Tabb, Richmond, Virginia, Rhetoric Class '74-'75." The lyrical swing is strong in all the poems, and the poetic ability is unmistakable. The influence of Poe and Hood indicates the sway these poets exercised over his art at this period.

The publication of *The Cloud*<sup>138</sup> marked the beginning of his literary career, which was brought to a close only by his death. During the intervening thirty-two years he wrote and published constantly.

He had the entree, investigation has shown, to all the first-class magazines of the country. To these he offered the products of his Muse with apparently such satisfactory results that I have been able to list 279 in the chronological order of their appearance. He contributed 53 poems to the *Sunday School Times* and the *Youth's Companion*,<sup>139</sup> 36 to *Harper's Monthly*, and 35 to *The Atlantic Monthly*. Only once after 1896 are there to be found any verses of his in *Lippincott's*, al-

tho he published 22 poems in all in that magazine. The same number appeared in the *Independent*.

*The Cosmopolitan*, in which his last poem was printed together with his picture and a short obituary,<sup>140</sup> published 18; *The Bookman* 14; *The Century* 7; *Harper's Weekly* 8; *Scribner's*, *The Era*, *The American Magazine*, each 2; *St. Nicholas*, *The Catholic World*, *English Illustrated Magazine*, *The Reader*, *Eclectic Magazine*, each 1. I cannot resist drawing from the fact that he published only one poem in certain periodicals the inference that he did not like the emolument and therefore never again submitted copy. Another odd circumstance, made clear by a study of the list, is that he does not seem to have published more than one poem in Catholic magazines; and I attribute this fact also to his dislike of publishing without remuneration at all or without sufficient compensation. Another important result derived from the comparison of this list of poems published in magazines with a complete index of his poems published in book form was the discovery that about 42 are not to be found in the latter and had, to all appearance, been forgotten when the various volumes were collected. The poems that made their appearance in the magazines constitute in fact only about one-fourth of Father Tabb's total output. The total number of identified poems to his credit reaches about 1,064 and includes the following:

PUBLISHED (in book form)

Serious.... 638

Humorous. 148

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Total.... 786

## UNPUBLISHED

	Tabb Album	Connor Ms.	Magazines	Donahoe	Miscell.
Serious....	60	90	42	5	..
Humorous.	18	7	..	..	56
Total....	278				

This number might be increased by adding many skits that are in the hands of his students, but I believe that it includes all the serious verses he would not object to seeing in print. The time has come, it seems to me, when nothing is more desirable than a collected edition of his poetry, in which the vacant half-page would be eliminated and the poems, with a word to explain their setting or occasion, would be arranged not in the present indifferent fashion but in groups according to their subject.

It was Father Tabb's custom to collect at various intervals the poems that he had published and the others that he had written and to give them to the world in those curiously attractive small volumes bearing the simplest of titles. His published work in verse includes *Poems*, *An Octave to Mary*, *Poems*, *Lyrics*, *Child Verse*, *Two Lyrics*, *Later Lyrics*, *The Rosary in Rhyme*, *Quips and Quiddits*, *A Selection of Verses*, and *Later Poems*.

Father Tabb's first volume was privately printed and contains neither the name of the printer<sup>141</sup> nor the date of publication. The date is variously given as 1882,<sup>142</sup> 1883<sup>143</sup> and 1884.<sup>144</sup> But the book certainly appeared in 1882. While I was looking thru Professor Browne's library I discovered the following letter attached to the front cover of the volume in question:

“St. Mary’s Seminary,  
June 2, 1882.

MY DEAR MR. BROWNE:

I have made this little collection of poems for private distribution, and you are among the first of my friends whom I have asked to accept it. Your unfailing kindness towards my work is one of the pleasantest thoughts I recall in connection with it. As Keats says to his brother George:

As to my sonnets, though none else should heed them,  
I feel delighted, still, that you should read them.

(Signed) JOHN B. TABB.”

If additional proof were needed, it would be afforded by the fact that none of the poems published in magazines after April, 1882, are to be found in this collection. It would indeed be strange if the book had been published in 1884 and had omitted all the poems<sup>145</sup> that appeared in the various periodicals in 1883 and 1884.

It is not at all improbable that if this volume were not known to be Father Tabb’s, it would be assigned by critics to some other poet. The difference between this book and those that came after it, the first of which appeared eleven years later (1893), is at once apparent; it differs in size and make-up and in the arrangement and in the length of the poems. The quatrain, the form in which Father Tabb was afterwards to excel, is not here. The shortest of the three short poems boasts ten verses. *The Hospital Bird* has 6 stanzas of 4 verses each; *The Vision of the Tarn*, 11 stanzas of 4 verses; *Invocation*, 6 stanzas of 5 verses; *Lindenward*, 8 stanzas of 4 verses; *Destiny*, 10 stanzas of 5 verses; and *The Rhyme of the Rock*, 14 stanzas of 5 verses. There are also 22 sonnets. Of



the 19 poems only seven were printed in the later volumes, and of the 22 sonnets only the same number. This book has long been out of print and it is now very difficult to obtain. Diligent search for critical opinion in the periodicals of the time has been unsuccessful. The only notice of it I have found occurs in the *Cambridge History of American Literature*,<sup>146</sup> where Dr. Miles says: "His first poems in 1883, some 19 lyrics and a few sonnets, reveal little of this originality or indeed of poetical promise." Unfortunately, this criticism is worth nothing; its vagueness first made me suspicious. I am now convinced beyond the shadow of a doubt that Dr. Miles never had a copy of *Poems* in his hands, but relied on his interpretation of Chapter X from M. S. Pine's book.

Father Tabb must have early recognized that writing poems of any length was beyond his power. A conscious poet and a fastidious artist, he had the good sense to withdraw from a field in which he could not conquer. Retreat here was praiseworthy. From this time on he confined himself to the short poem of the Greek epigram type; thus it was that Paul Elmer More could appropriately call him "our Catholic Epigrammatist."<sup>147</sup>

Altho he continued to write for the magazines, eleven years went by before the appearance of another volume. *An Octave to Mary* came out in 1893. It was a de luxe edition and was ornamented by a frontispiece of the Annunciation by E. Burne-Jones. It contains only eight poems, each an offering to Mary, the longest of which, *Child and Mother*, consists of three sestets. One of these poems, *A Pair of Turtle Doves*, is reprinted in *The Rosary in Rhyme* under a new title, *The Presentation*. The value of this collection is to be

judged more from the devotional point of view than the literary. A belated notice in the *Critic* says: "As expressions of what may be called the religious fancy, the poems are not without charm. Gems they are not except in size."<sup>148</sup>

Father Tabb's first important literary venture was made when *Poems* appeared in December, 1894. The volume, dedicated to his friend, Sidney Lanier, who he said first encouraged him to poetic effort,<sup>149</sup> came from the press of John Lane in London, and Copeland and Day in Boston. This seems to be the most popular of his collections, as it has gone thru seventeen editions. Its popularity was immediate.<sup>150</sup> In a letter to Professor Browne he speaks of his own pleasure at the reception accorded the book and also mentions an interesting fact, altho I am not prepared to say whether the distinction is still unrivaled.

"Mattoax, Amelia County, Va.,

July 17, 1896.

I am sending you two other specimens for the Album, if they meet with your approval. Mr. Wilson, of the University Press, tells Mr. Day that no other *first* book of American Poetry has gone through so many editions as mine, with the one exception of the *Poems* of Miss Dickinson. I know it will please you and yours to hear this.

(Signed) JOHN B. TABB."

English critics were far more favorable in their judgement of this volume than the American. The writer of the review, under the heading, *The Poetry of Delicate Shading*,<sup>151</sup> among other things had this to say: "What could be more delicate in its way than this little *Fern-song*, and yet what more single in its

effect? His *Fern-song* is perfect because the whole effect is meant to be and is as delicate and fragile as its shading. But in many of these minute studies he aims at bringing down heaven to earth, and then he is naturally not so successful in concentrating a universe in a dew-drop, as he is in impressing on us the effect of the frail and thirsty fern. But how happily he can deal with a breath of feeling, at once reflecting it and yet engraving it on the mind, as the impression of seal is taken on wax, the charming little poem on *Playmates* shows. \* \* \* In this new poet, while we see the effort to stamp an individual thought on each poem in all its strength, there is combined with that effect a delicacy of shading which shows the growing richness of the inner life of New England society with singular force."

"The most interesting of the new brood of English poets," writes the reviewer in the *Nation*,<sup>152</sup> are unquestionably of Celtic race and often Catholics; it is a remarkable fact that the most noticeable recent names on each side of the water are of the same faith—Francis Thompson in England and Father Tabb in America. Non-Puritan tho his verses be, they show the most singular analogy here and there with those of the most Puritanic and self-contained of New England women—Emily Dickinson. The woman's characterization is far more terse and vigorous, with more motion and color; she does not, like the man, sentimentalize a little bit over the blossom and the wooer; but who can help seeing the analogy? There are depths reached by Emily Dickinson in her strange way that Father Tabb does not reach, but he touches a far greater variety of interests, and shows constantly the sense of finish and form on a far larger scale,

qualities the want of which was so plain in her. There are poems like Herrick and Vaughan in their delicate perfection, pieces of almost flawless chiselling, as for instance, *Grief Song*. When we add that no recent poet has written with more longing tenderness of woman's love and with more delicious playful fondness of childhood and infancy, the reader must needs wonder what early joys and sorrows went to the making of this poet."

The criticism in the *Atlantic Monthly* damned with faint praise, but it was obviously not the result of the careful consideration and study which marked the expression of British opinion. "Father Tabb," said the reviewer,<sup>154</sup> "has found metaphors for very many phenomena of nature and experiences in life, many of the conceits are attractive, and the work is always skilfully polished, but the little poems are things best read, where many of them first appeared, at the end of a page of prose in a magazine. There they are welcome bits of fancy; here their effect is to leave one feeling as if one had arisen from a dinner of crumbs." If this is so, what, I ask, is to become of the *Greek Anthology*?<sup>154</sup>

Three years later, in 1897, *Lyrics* was published by Small, Maynard, and Company. The first edition appeared in March and was followed by the second in the same month, the third in April, and the fourth in October. The last edition, the tenth, was printed in 1920. The following poems were reprinted from the 1882 volume: all the sonnets except *Forecast*, *The Druid*, and *Restraint*, if the latter can be called a sonnet; and *The Bridge*, *Interpreted*, *Asleep*, and *The Dews*.

The *Outlook* emphasized the individuality of the lyrics, their delicacy, and their originality. "Lyrics

contains genuine verse. Father Tabb has not only a very delicate touch, but he has also a very original fancy. He gives us the unobvious aspect of things; he makes us feel their hidden charm. He has a fine subtlety of imagination which charms, illumines, and sometimes perplexes."<sup>155</sup>

After describing the make-up of the book, the reviewer in the *Critic*<sup>156</sup> continued: "When it comes to qualitative considerations, one is compelled to acknowledge that Father Tabb is a master of miniature verse; whatever it be—fancy, a picture, a simile, an experience, a description—the song is always brief and touched with beauty and charm. The author's interpretation of Nature is always felicitous, and his manner of expressing his thoughts is individual enough to distinguish his work from that of his fellow-poets. This is his second collection of *Lyrics* and is in every way a worthy successor of the first, which had a large and well-deserved popularity."

The *Nation*<sup>157</sup> again pointed out the curious resemblance of Father Tabb to Emily Dickinson, and observed that "there is a promise of a more lyric and melodious quality than we have before attributed to this poet, as in *Slumber Song*. There is scarcely one of the small pages that does not contain a thought, and hardly a thought without a gem of originality."<sup>158</sup>

Until the year 1899 Father Tabb's volumes were characterized by the serious tone of their contents. Altho touches of a light fancy were evident in many of the poems, yet there were no professedly humorous verses in any of his collections. However, a few of the comic verses that he had been writing during the preceding years and offering to his students found their way into the magazines. But it was only with the publication of *Child Verse—Poems Grave and*



*Gay* that he made his formal bow to the literary world as a humorist. Dedicated to a child, Henry Dinneen, a nephew of his friend Father Dinnen, the book, numbering 78 pages, was published by Small, Maynard, and Company. In a note found on the page preceding the table of contents Father Tabb stated "that while a few of the poems are reprinted from the magazines, most of the contents is new." It cannot be said that the poems appeal, as a whole to children, for, altho the diction is simple and childlike, the point, on account of the subtlety of the pun, is frequently obscure. The *Outlook* declared: "It can hardly be said that it is a volume for children; at least the child who is to enjoy it must have a great deal of imagination. The exceptional child will be delighted; so will the exceptional man or woman, to whom Father Tabb's work always makes it appeal." The criticism of the *Nation*<sup>160</sup> was more severe. "Its gay pieces are chiefly punning, usually too subtle for a laugh until explained, and its grave are marked by conceits which contain little for the infant mind." The *Critic* charged that "The various verses in which the God-child is his theme produce an effect of artifice rather than artlessness, and are pretty sure to shock the devout." According to the *Independent*,<sup>161</sup> "The little book has many a zestful piece of rhythm and rime, good to the taste of the healthy people, old and young. A gentle and simple humor beams from almost every page, and the little poems sparkle generously and jingle with the true ring of sympathy." The reviewer alluded to the slight coarseness of a few of the pieces, a fault that was characteristic of many of his impromptu class-room verses and that marred some of his later *Quips and Quiddits*. "Once or twice in a way the good Father

comes near to, what shall we say, coarseness?—but he is even then funny.”<sup>162</sup>

Father Tabb's next publication was a curious one. It is a small book containing two short lyrics, from which it takes its title—*Two Lyrics*. It is a de luxe edition, of which 375 copies were printed on handmade paper and 50 on Japan paper, and was lettered and decorated by Theodore Brown Hapgood, Jr., and illuminated by Emilie Marthecai Whitten for the Craftman's Guild, December, 1900. *Dusk*, one of the two poems, was afterwards offered by Professor Browne as a hitherto unpublished poem.<sup>163</sup> I am inclined to believe that the origin of this strange book is to be ascribed not to Father Tabb but to Mr. Hapgood and Miss Whitten, who, desiring to display their own artistic ability, approached Father Tabb for a few poems to be used in a special piece of book-making that was to serve chiefly as a specimen of their art.

This was followed in 1902 by *Later Lyrics*, published by John Lane Company,<sup>164</sup> and dedicated to “My Sister and in memory of Mrs. Armistead G. Taylor, who was to her a Sister in affection unto death.” It numbers 138 pages, and is made up of poems previously published in the periodicals that are listed on the back of the title page and of 93 new poems. *St. Mary of Egypt* is reprinted from *Poems* (1882). *St. Afra to The Flames* and *The Boy Bishop*, which at first sight may be taken for sonnets, are in reality not such.

“This volume,” wrote the reviewer in the *Book News*,<sup>165</sup> “like the three before, has distinction on every page. It lacks sweep; there is no sustained power. The poems are strictly of the impression. They give that as fresh-minted coin gives the clear lines of the die.” After commenting upon Father Tabb's mastery

of poetry in miniature, the writer in the *Critic*<sup>166</sup> ventured the following prediction: "It is quite likely that some of his poems 'in little' will be read when productions far longer, and now accounted great, are dust,—or at least are covered with it."<sup>167</sup>

*The Rosary in Rhyme*, dedicated to the Right Rev. Alfred A. Curtis, another de luxe edition of 350 copies, with full page decorations and initial letters done by Thomas B. Meteyard, came from the house of Small, Maynard, and Company, in 1904. Fifteen short poems constitute the book, each commemorating one of the mysteries associated with the rosary. All are new except one—*The Presentation*—which had appeared in *An Octave to Mary* and in *Child Verse*. The original manuscript, bound in book form apparently by Father Tabb himself, is now in the possession of Miss Lucy H. Browne.

*A Selection from the Verses of John B. Tabb*, made by the late Alice Meynell, and dedicated to her, was published in 1907 by Burns and Oates. This book, as the name indicates, is a collection of poems selected as the most representative from all those that were to be found in the volumes since 1894. The selection is distinguished by the refined taste and discriminating judgement that one always associates with the work of the English poet, and it won from Father Tabb unstinted praise. He was more interested in the preparation of this volume than in any other and was even anxious as to the reception it would receive. One of the most significant letters that I have read among Father Tabb's is concerned with this matter. It was addressed to Professor Browne.

Xmas-day, '06.

I am getting, dear Doctor, from England the very kindest notices of my book. One in the *Academy* of

Nov. 17, I'd like you to see. From the *Tribune* comes a clipping so like your own estimate and worded so like it, that were you in London, I should lay it to your charge. "A Modern Herrick," it is headed. Of this poet the *Golden Treasury* has all that I know. With Herbert and Blake I am even less familiar; and yet it is to these three that they compare me. Nothing, I am glad to observe, is detected of my worship of Keats, whom I know best of the gods. With cordial greetings to Mrs. B. and your children, I am always

Affectionately yours,

(Signed) JOHN B. TABB."

The criticisms that pleased Father Tabb and that he referred to in his letter read as follows: "Those who overlook this little volume of songs will miss a good thing. To Mrs. Meynell the making of this selection must have been a labour of love, and she has done it admirably. Mr. Tabb is perfect *in petto*; but what an immensity it (*Silence*) opens up. \* \* \* There is surely a touch of genius, of inspiration, in so small a poem (*At the Year's End*) which can thus open up by suggestion a spiritual world; a little window that looks upon the infinite. \* \* \* His is the work of a mind in which the improving spirit is so strong that its lightest thoughts, its *nugae*, may be lit up by the eternal. And this is one of the reasons why Mr. Tabb is not a mere epigrammatist in verse. The deliciously tender songs of childhood, of flowers, \* \* \* are the work of one who is none the less a poet, because four lines often contain his thought."<sup>168</sup> The *Athenaeum*<sup>169</sup> speaks of the volume as a "number of little poems, slight, musical, generally felicitous in expression, but seldom profound. When he sings of Nature, Mr. Tabb has distinction and a delicate fancy at least,

if nothing more; as *Kildee*, *Clover*, and *To The Violet*. But he is at his best when dealing with themes more directly human, like *Chanticleer* with its oft recurring refrain and its subtle mingling of playfulness and tears. Where there is so much of real reverence, is it not a little jarring to come upon such stanzas as *Is Thy Servant A Dog?* and *Out of Bounds*, where, granting them all sincerity, we find a suspicion of grotesqueness which consorts ill with the solemnity of the subject." The reviewer in the *London Times*,<sup>170</sup> endeavoring to classify the poet's philosophy, declared that he was not a mystic, nor a Platonist, nor a pantheist, but an idealist. "His mind has arrived at an unusually forcible and insistent conviction of the unity of creation, natural and spiritual. His creed enables him to see love and beauty where less favored minds might revolt against the cruelty or misery they could not understand. Tabb, avoiding packing and elaboration, is full of significance. Contrast the long, voluminous rushing flow of Lanier with the minute delicately carved work of Father Tabb. Father Tabb, working within the limits which the nature of his art inevitably determined, piping, so to speak, upon his flute, can do things which Lanier's great four-manual organ could never accomplish."<sup>171</sup>

*Quips and Quiddits, Ques for the Qurious*, a book composed entirely of humorous verse, dedicated to "My cousin and namesake," John Tabb Heywood, and to all who at any time have been my sons in Christ, was published by Small, Maynard, and Company in 1907. There are 106 pages, altho unnumbered, and 50 illustrations, many of which were suggested in outline by Father Tabb. The hand of the poet can be readily seen by students of St. Charles' in the cartoons of



*A Mark of True Greatness and Facial Latitude.*<sup>172</sup> As a matter of fact, Father Tabb expressed strong dissatisfaction with the illustrations and declared that he could have done as well as the cartoonist. Nor was there much exaggeration in this remark, for he displayed genuine ability in conceiving and executing a ridiculous idea or situation, or personal characterization, and many extant cartoons bear out the truth of his assertion.<sup>173</sup> The *Book News*<sup>174</sup> observed that the book contained "keen rhyme of the comic sort by a man capable of better things."

*Later Poems* appeared in 1910, nearly a year after Father Tabb's death. Mrs. Meynell had begun the collection during the last year of the poet's life, but he died before she had completed her work. This collection, which contains some of his best work, especially the poems relating to his blindness, appears for some unknown reason to have been neglected by the critics. A solitary notice is all that I have discovered; it comes from the *Book News*, and is as follows: "*Later Poems*—several score of Father Tabb's delicate and wistful fancies wrought into verse, some of them effective, some of rather light moment. At his best he has strength of feeling and affection, expressed in succinct, flawless form."<sup>175</sup>

The number of volumes here listed to Father Tabb's credit may be a surprise even to some of his admirers, but more surprising to all will certainly be the statement that enough poems remain to make another volume. Some of these poems have been recovered from the pages of the magazines in which they appeared, but most of the better sort are preserved in manuscript along with about two hundred other poems in the Tabb Album. This was the name given to the collection of

manuscript poems made by Professor Browne. Remarks in certain letters indicate that he was to include in this album only those poems sent him by Father Tabb that the former considered worthy of publication. In a letter without date, in which he states that *The Counterfeiter*<sup>176</sup> is not his and offers two original humorous verses to Miss Lucy (Browne), he says: "*Chanticleer, if it rings right, I send for the Album.*" At the bottom of the manuscript of *Somewhere* are written the words

"Some efforts at creation  
For Tabb-album-ization."<sup>177</sup>

This Album was specially made. Constructed after the pattern of a photograph album, with unslit pages, however, it numbers about 84 quarto leaves, on which the manuscripts are, with a few exceptions, pasted. It is bound in a very dark brown Turkish leather,<sup>178</sup> edged with gilt stripes, and on the front cover are imprinted in gilt the words:

AUTOGRAPH POEMS  
OF THE  
REV. JOHN B. TABB

On the fly-leaf is pasted a pen and ink sketch of the poet in his own hand. The album is now in the possession of Miss Lucy Hand Browne.

This Album I discovered accidentally. Knowing that Professor Browne's daughter was still living, I decided to visit her in order to learn what she knew of her father's friendship with Father Tabb. Imagine my delight when Miss Browne produced, in addition to two bundles of letters and post-cards, this book of manuscript poems, and told me that I might make whatever use of them I desired. As the worth of this

Tabbiana to the biographer and critic cannot be too highly estimated, all lovers of Father Tabb owe a debt of gratitude to Miss Browne for her generosity in allowing me to make unconditioned use of all the Tabb material in her possession.

Only one other collection of manuscripts, to my knowledge, exists. It is in the possession of Rev. Daniel J. Connor, of Jersey Shore, Pa., who received it from the poet himself in 1909. It is a small note-book, covered in black leather, of 166 pages, six by four, some of which have been inserted, so that there are now three distinct paginations. Scarcely another quatrain could be written in the book, so completely has all the available space been utilized.

Three hundred and thirty-seven poems are here preserved, one hundred and six of which are yet unpublished. Only seven are humorous, a much smaller number than one would expect. The most remarkable feature of this collection, one which distinguishes it from the Tabb Album, is that almost all the poems are definitely dated: ninety-five belong to 1895; seventy-nine to 1892; fifty-eight to 1893; fifty-four to 1894; and thirty-four to 1896. A few have two dates; for instance, the first stanza of *Deus Absconditus* is dated "Sept., 1892," and the second, a revision, "Jan. & Feb., 1896." Other poems show two or three forms, for example, *Fugitives*, *Growth*, and *Heroes*. Many of the poems are duplicates of the Tabb Album.

To the poems found in the Tabb Album and the Connor Manuscript, which I print in Appendix II and III, are to be added those which, as I discovered during my search thru the magazines, are not to be found in any of his volumes. They date from various periods in his life and were apparently overlooked when the

various collections were made. As many of these are equal to his best, I feel certain that they were not deliberately rejected as unworthy, but were omitted thru loss of manuscript or forgetfulness of the place of original publication. These I print in Appendix IV. Among them I have included a translation of the *Stabat Mater*, which was printed by the *Baltimore Sun*, under the wrong title *St. Joseph*, as Father Tabb's. There is no manuscript to support this, and the poem does not occur in any of his books. This is the only translation that I know has been assigned to Father Tabb, altho Mr. Jacobi<sup>179</sup> speaks of an English version of Horace's *Ars Poetica* begun by him. What the fate of this was I cannot say, but the loss of even the fragment is to be regretted. An obscure allusion to a translation occurs in a letter to Professor Browne, dated April 25, 1895. "If you find," he writes, "the translation I sent you worth continuing, please return it to me. Otherwise destroy it." All attempts to run down this clue have failed.

In striking contrast to the large amount of verse that came from Father Tabb's indefatigable pen was the slender amount of prose. Yet even in this there is present the indelible, unmistakable Tabb characteristic—brevity. His letters usually cover no more than two invariably small pages; in fact, I have seen only one that was four pages in length—the letter to Professor Browne on the occasion of Bishop Curtis' death. Moreover, the only meditation that he ever gave in the College Chapel was remembered as the shortest ever heard there.<sup>180</sup> Only two of his prose works were published: one, a grammar; the other, a sermon.

*Bone Rules* or *Skeleton of English Grammar* was published in 1897, perhaps one of the most unique

grammars that have ever been printed. Humor abounds on almost every page, and the author's sympathy with the difficulty of students in apprehending grammatical principles finds record in the clever inscription

TO MY PUPILS,  
Active and Passive, Perfect and Imperfect,  
Past, Present, and Future—By their  
Loving Father Tabb.<sup>181</sup>

The book contains 151 pages, of which 71 are covered with sentences good and bad, to be corrected, analyzed, and parsed. The subject matter, as the title suggests, is reduced to the necessary modicum, the book containing not more than ten per cent of his actual course in English Grammar, and is presented in the simplest language at his command. One of its most engaging and individual features consists of the incorrect sentences cast in the form of verse,<sup>182</sup> which I have elsewhere called the product of his ungrammatical muse. It also has a large collection of sentence-gems from the master poets of English literature.<sup>183</sup> To these he refers in a letter to Professor Browne.

April 9, 1901.

Many thanks for your interesting letter. The construction is an odd one; and, so far as I remember, I have never seen the like. As to the superstitions, I agree with you fully. They come, perhaps, from some source older than Christianity. Faith points the other way. I'll send you soon, or bring you, a little English manual that I use in my classes. One thing about it, I am sure, you will approve—the selection of Examples. Its brevity is another recommendation, I hope; but you shall judge for yourself.

The enclosed is for your Album.

P. S.—Don't you know this goat-a-tion? (*To His Tormentor*)<sup>184</sup>



The only review that I have been able to find appeared in the *Independent*.<sup>185</sup> "This is a capital little manual, with the substance of English Grammar packed into it, in brief definitions, rules, analysis, and forms. It sometimes pays the penalty of brevity, as in the definition of neuter verbs. \* \* \* Sometimes brevity leads to error, as in the definition of the perfect tense and in its relation to the imperfect."<sup>186</sup> The best criticism that can be made of this unique grammar is that with it Father Tabb obtained wonderful results in teaching the elements of English grammar and in preparing a solid foundation for the study of Greek and Latin.

The sermon, the only other extant specimen of his prose, was printed in the *Baltimore Catholic Review* and reprinted by M. S. Pine<sup>187</sup>; the original copy belonged to the Rev. Michael J. Ahern, of Old Point Comfort. Father Tabb delivered this sermon on *The Assumption* in St. Peter's Cathedral, in Richmond, on the Feast of the Assumption, August 15, 1894. It is short as sermons go, for its length does not exceed fourteen hundred words. In form it is characterized by a strongly marked native diction and short, pithy, positive sentences; and in content by analogical argumentation and intimate knowledge of the Scriptures—characteristics, likewise, of his poetry.

Another piece of prose, in which he collaborated with another professor at St. Charles', Father Haug, was lost in the fire that destroyed the college, including the library, on March 16, 1911. This was a rather long essay on *The Sublime and Beautiful*, and was in manuscript form only. The loss of this in the fire was a cause for regret, because it would indeed be instructive to see how Father Tabb, for those who were

fortunate enough to hear portions of it read in class testify that Father Tabb's touch was everywhere evident, approached and treated this subject which has been a fertile field for the speculation of many brilliant minds.

Both Professor Gildersleeve and Professor Browne's son are agreed that they remember reading an account of his experiences as a blockade-runner written by himself. As neither of them, unfortunately, can recall the place or date of this article, and as I have not been successful in seeking it, I must content myself with merely mentioning it.

## CHAPTER IX

### BLINDNESS AND DEATH

The affliction that had been threatening Father Tabb for years became a reality in 1908. During the preceding year his eyesight had begun to grow steadily worse, so that he had to resign from his classes.

This was the severest blow that could befall him, for his heart, as he said, was in teaching. He continued, however, in order to have something to occupy his mind, to instruct a few students privately. But even these after a while he had to give up.

Of the period of incipient and total blindness he has left a written record in the poems that appeared in the magazines. First came, in May, 1908,

#### A SUNSET SONG

Fade not yet, O summer day,  
For my love hath answered yea.  
Keep us from the coming night,  
Lest our blossom suffer blight.

Fear thou not: if love be true,  
Closer will it cleave to you;  
'Tis the darkened hours that prove  
Faith or Faithlessness in Love.

(Harper's Monthly, L. P., p. 49)

This was followed in August by that oft-quoted poem that challenges immortality.

## GOING BLIND

Back to the primal gloom  
 Where life began,  
 As to my mother's womb  
 Must I a man  
 Return:  
 Not to be born again,  
 But to remain;  
 And in the school of darkness learn  
 What mean  
 "The Things Unseen."  
 (Atlantic Monthly, L. P., p. 107.)

With full knowledge that in a few months total blindness would cast him into a new and strange world, a world of darkness and memories, he awaited the catastrophe with the undaunted courage of a strong man and a true follower of Christ. Never did he allow the few attacks of dejection that he experienced to master him. He accepted the affliction with resignation and bore it with patience. Years before he had sung his attitude in the verses

"Ah, if my grief his guerdon be,  
 My dark his light,  
 I count each loss felicity,  
 And bless the night." (P., p. 4.)

November had almost passed when the cross of many poets was laid full-weight upon him. *Loss* (January, 1909) gave expression to the fact of his blindness,

For one extinguished light  
 Of Love, all heaven is nigh:  
 For one frail flower the less,  
 The world is wilderness.

(American Magazine, L. P., p. 44.)

*The Image-Maker* referred to the physical marks of blindness—

"Thou shalt no graven image make;"  
And yet, O Sculptor, for the sake  
Of such an effigy as I—  
The superscription like the face  
Disfigured now, and hard to trace—  
Didst thou thyself consent to die. (Atlantic)

Pathetic resignation to his lot is the note of

#### BLIND

Again as in the desert way,  
Behold my guides—a cloud by day,  
A flame by night:  
For darkness wakens with the morn,  
But dreams, of midnight slumber born,  
Bring back the light.  
(Harper's, March, L. P., p. 108.)

*Waves* (March) records one of his melancholy moods and his prayer for relief.

We sighed of old till underneath His feet  
Our pulses beat,  
Again to sigh in restlessness until  
He saith, "Be still."  
And with us is the ever-moving wind,  
And all mankind—  
A triple chorus—each upheaving breast,  
A sigh for rest. (Scribner's.)

Blind tho he was, he insisted upon independence in all his actions. He would not permit any one to lead him about until the very last months of his life. He always, for instance, felt his way from his room on the third floor down to the refectory on the first. Alone every morning he walked up and down the third portico, the only exercise he took. And he insisted on paying his board from the time he retired from active duty until his death.



Perhaps a year before he died, he mailed this brief note to his friends: "Since loss of sight made me a boarder at St. Charles', the faculty, resenting my choice of independence, has left me quite alone, forgetting to provide even promised occupation till I threatened to seek it elsewhere. \* \* \* Strange as it may seem, I have never felt lonely nor am I often depressed, but thru the never failing kindness of the students I find myself here in the life of my choice about the happiest of their teachers."

Father Tabb's excessive independence and sensitiveness caused him at this time to distort and misinterpret many things that were done primarily for his own benefit and comfort. The faculty of the college was striving to relieve him of all duties, so that the burden of his blindness might be somewhat lightened. His colleagues, knowing his condition better than he, acted according to their judgement of what should be done. Unfortunately, what they thought best and what Father Tabb thought best were not identical solutions. No one who knows the circumstances in which the above note was written would attach the slightest blame to the faculty of St. Charles'.

Deprived of the pleasure of reading his breviary and unwilling to surrender all his priestly functions, he obtained permission to continue saying Mass daily with the assistance of another priest. Sad it was indeed, but truly inspiring, to see this blind priest offering his Mass in the dim light of a few candles in the small gallery chapel near his own room, reciting the various prayers of the Mass for the Blessed Virgin or of the Dead, and moving about with a strange carefulness that only added solemnity to the scene.

He kept to his room during the greater part of the day, leaving it only to go to his meals and to walk on

the portico. But he was not without company. A few students and members of the faculty who were welcome used to visit him often and help him in every possible way. We would read his mail to him and write his letters. Sometimes he would dictate a poem that he had been unable to write on the special pad he had made to insure a straight line and to prevent overlapping of lines. Sometimes we were called upon to decipher a poem that he had written, many of which we were surprised to find humorous in spite of his great sadness that would have killed another less courageous soul. At other times we read to him from the current magazines, especially the *Academy*, *Tablet*, and *Atlantic Monthly*. In the spring of 1909, when I was a frequent visitor to the room, I read to him Francis Thompson's essay on Shelley. So enthusiastic was he over certain portions that he had me read them two or three times. Frequently, when we were reading to him, a phrase would catch his ear and would recall a stanza or even a whole poem, which he would then repeat from memory. There was nothing that I enjoyed better at this time than to sit beside him and listen to him interpreting the songs of his favorite poets. I have never since been so near the hallowed shrine of poetry as I was in that spring of 1909—never since so fervent a communicant.

The summer he spent at the college, perhaps the loneliest summer he had ever been called upon to endure. The students were at home, and only a few of the faculty remained. He bore his solitude cheerfully enough, but by the time the students returned in September he knew that his days were numbered.

Slowly did death approach, slowly like his blindness. Paralysis set in and made its way gradually to the vital

centers. The Rev. Dr. Farrell, the college physician, called in Dr. Taylor, of Washington, whose family had always been on familiar terms with the Tabbs; and both recognized that the poet was beyond human aid. Dr. Taylor remarked, "He is going the way of all the Tabbs." Softening of the brain had made its appearance. However, Father Tabb's mind was clear to the very last. Father Hogue, who was in constant attendance upon Father Tabb, went to his room on the day before his death and read a poem he had found in one of the magazines. When he reached the poet's bedside he found him chattering away, with eyes fixed, as it were, on some definite object, and engaged in animated conversation. Now and then the word "Mother" fell from his lips distinctly. At Father Hogue's greeting, Father Tabb stopped abruptly and asked, "What is it, Father Hogue?" "I have a beautiful poem," said the latter, "to read to you. Do you want to hear it?" "By all means," came the reply. When the reading was finished, he remarked, "That's lovely; read the fourth stanza again." This request complied with, Father Hogue waited to see what he should do—stay or go. To his utter astonishment Father Tabb resumed his unintelligible chattering. Shortly afterwards he lapsed into a coma, which was interrupted only a few hours before he died. His last words, breathed with a supreme effort to Dr. Farrell, gave expression to the wonderful courage with which he met death. Throughout his whole life he scorned fear and the coward; and in his blindness and on his death-bed he showed himself the very personification of bravery—he looked death in the face and was unafraid.

The end came peacefully at eleven o'clock on the night of November 19. He had the happiness of dying

as he wished—in sleep, thus realizing his own desire expressed in his first volume of poems in the sonnet

## UNMOORED

To die in sleep—to drift from dream to dream  
Along the banks of Slumber, beckoned on  
Perchance by forms familiar, till anon,  
Unconsciously, the ever-widening stream  
Beyond the breaker bore thee, and the beam  
Of everlasting morning woke upon  
Thy dazzled gaze, revealing one by one  
Thy visions grown immortal in its gleam! (P., p. 168.)

Three days later the funeral services were held in the college chapel and were attended by many of his former students and friends who came from distant places to pay their last tribute of respect and love. The eulogy was delivered by one of his brilliant students, Father Daniel J. Connor. In the afternoon the students, chanting the prayers for the dead, accompanied the body a short distance towards Ellicott City, where it was put on a train for Richmond by way of Relay. At this transfer station the children of St. Augustine's parochial school paid tribute to the memory of the departed lover of little ones by singing his favorite hymn, *Lead, Kindly Light*.

In Richmond a second requiem Mass was celebrated in St. Peter's Church, at which Bishop Van de Vyver presided, and a second eulogy pronounced by his friend Father Joseph Magri. His body was then laid to rest in the beautiful section of Hollywood Cemetery belonging to another friend, Mr. Gordon Blair. He was the last of his family, and the thought must have saddened him, for the last poem he published gave poignant emphasis to his consciousness of this fact.

## SURVIVAL

The tempest past—  
A home in ruin laid,  
But lo! where last  
The little children played  
At hide-and-seek,  
A foot-print small  
Pleads silently,  
As if afraid to speak,  
"Behold thou me,  
The least and last of all."

(Cosmopolitan, November, L P., p. 103.)



## CHAPTER X

### RELIGION AND POETRY

No literary investigator should consider his work finished before he has found something distinctive in the style of the author he is studying, some stylistic quality or other that stamps the work in such a way as to identify it with the personality of its author. So clear is this stylistic signature that experienced critics, and even observant readers, can usually pronounce with relative surety that such and such a verse or stanza is to be found in Milton or Wordsworth, in Pope or Shelley; or that such and such a sentence or paragraph is the product of Macaulay or Newman, De Quincey or Ruskin. This recognition is, after all, only the practical application of Buffon's definition of style, "It is the man." We are psychologically justified in looking for the characteristics of an author's life—mental, moral, and physical—to be reflected clearly and distinctly in the work that he produces; we rightly expect to find the man in his work. In the case of Father Tabb, then, we should seek and expect to find certain characteristics of style that distinguish his writing from that of other poets. We should confidently search for the marks of the priest in the songs of the poet.

Father Tabb has been called the *Poet-Priest*, the *Priest-Poet*, the *Inspired Singer of the Catholic Church*; and his poetry has been lauded as *Gems of the Sanctu-*

ary, and *Treasures of the Church*. All these phrases imply that he is a religious poet and that his song is of sacred persons, events, and things; and they recall those seventeenth century lyrists of sacred themes, Crashaw, Herbert, and Vaughan, and Cardinal Newman, Father Faber, and John Keble, of the nineteenth. Such an impression, however, is not supported by an examination of the titles of his poems. Only two of his volumes, containing in all about twenty - three poems, bear a distinctly religious title: *An Octave To Mary*, published in 1893, and made up of eight short poems more or less directly applicable to the Blessed Virgin; and *The Rosary in Rhyme*, published in 1904. In his other books (*Poems, Lyrics, etc.*) the number of the poems the titles of which are distinctly religious average about twelve to the volume. When one, therefore, discovers that the average number of poems in each volume is one hundred and fifty, one is likely to be surprised and at the same time perplexed as to how the application of such comprehensive epithets as *Poet of the Sanctuary* and *Inspired Singer of the Catholic Church* is justified.

On the other hand, the most casual survey of the table of contents of any one of these volumes points rather to a poet of Nature than to a poet of religion. Who could infer from such titles as *Dawn, Midnight, Shell-Tints, Echo, The Lark, To a Rose*, that the content is colored by religion?

But this is the very feature of Father Tabb's poetry that strikes me most forcibly. He is as truly a religious poet as was Crashaw, notwithstanding the fact that the strictly religious themes of his song are comparatively few. As was his personality, so was his poetry—essentially religious. As he concealed his piety in act-

ual life, so did he hide religion in his poetry. There is a passage in Strong's essay on Milton<sup>188</sup> that may be applied to Father Tabb. "What the poet *sees* will depend on what the poet *is*; if he is a sensual soul, he will revel in dreams of sense, and will strive to reproduce them; if he is an ardent lover of purity and goodness he will embody these in 'thoughts that breathe and words that burn.'" Briefly stated, my point is this: Father Tabb is a religious poet not by virtue of his themes, but more characteristically by virtue of the methods he used in the treatment of subjects, whether of the natural or moral order.

In the phrase religious poet I intend the term *religious* to comprehend the following notes: the Church—its doctrines, sacraments, ethics, liturgy, and devotions; the Old and New Testaments; legends of the saints; and finally, personal feelings and sentiments, or the poet's reactions to these other elements.

As I have already suggested, there are approximately eighty-five poems that are to be classified as distinctly religious in title as well as in content. These I have tried to arrange in convenient groups.<sup>189</sup> Of this class I shall give but two specimens, a sonnet and a quatrain.

#### KEDRON

Where silence broods on ruin, thou alone,  
Sweet oracle, in rippling numbers low,  
Dost onward through the waste of ages flow,  
As an eternal echo. With thy tone  
Blent David's holy anthems, and the moan  
That shook his heart in exile didst thou know,  
What time his tears of tributary woe  
Commingled with thy wave. And David's son  
In after years, on Love's vicarious way,  
Breathed life above thee, and thy torrent told,  
Its music to the wide-proclaiming sea:

And still, through all earth's changes manifold,  
Where death and silence strive for mastery,  
Throbs the prophetic burden of thy lay.<sup>190</sup> (L., p. 182)

### THE INCARNATION

Save through the flesh Thou wouldst not come to me—  
The flesh, wherein thy strength my weakness found  
A weight to bow Thy Godhead to the ground,  
And lift to heaven a lost humanity. (P., p. 92)

This group considered, let us examine those poems which constitute the bulk of Father Tabb's work and are the particular object of my investigation. These poems justify the claim that he is a truly religious poet, altho none of them is distinguished by a religious title or theme.

It is here that I wish to lay special stress on Father Tabb's unique poetry of Nature. He has the same sensitive attitude to birds and flowers and clouds and all other natural phenomena as Wordsworth, altho he does not hold the latter's philosophical and mystical point of view. He experienced the same rapturous contemplation of the singing lark and the deathless cloud as did Shelley. But he reacted to these experiences in a far different manner and recorded them in a unique transcription.

The peculiar essence of the poems consists in the subtle union of natural ideas—broadly considered, from other than the sphere of Nature—and religious language. Before I discuss the method of this union I think it best to offer a number of specimens of this genre, and I shall select that group which uses material from the New and Old Testaments.

The poet, for example, sees the waves of the sea in constant motion and contrasts them with the static condition of the hills. Then springs into his mind that

incident in which figured our Saviour and Mary, recorded by St. Luke.

"Now it came to pass as they went, that he entered into a certain town; and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister, called Mary, who, sitting also at the Lord's feet, heard his word.

"But Martha was busy about much serving. Who stood and said: 'Lord, hast thou no care that my sister has left me alone to serve? Speak to her, therefore, that she help me.'

"But the Lord answering said to her: 'Martha, Martha, thou art careful and are troubled about many things: but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the best part, which shall not be taken away from her.' " (X, 38-42)

The natural phenomena the poet then combines with the implied teaching of the Scriptural passage in the felicitously expressed sestet, which was sent to a man who told Father Tabb that he could not see what good cloistered nuns could do,

#### THE SISTERS

The waves forever move;  
The hills forever rest;  
Yet each the heavens approve,  
And Love alike hath blessed  
A Martha's household care,  
A Mary's cloistered prayer. (L., p. 17)

Or the poet sees a ray of sunshine extending from heaven to earth and thinks of it as the means whereby water is raised to the clouds; and the priest begins to look upon the ray as a ladder which the tiny drops of water are climbing after the manner of the angels ascending Jacob's ladder. (Gen. xxviii, 12)



## THE SUNBEAM

A ladder from the land of Light,  
 I rest upon the sod,  
 Whence dewy angels of the Night  
 Climb back again to God. (P., p. 145)

Or the poet observes the dawn-star growing paler as twilight gives place to day, and the priest suggests the Scriptural account of the betrayal by Judas as the medium of expression.

## THE BETRAYAL

"Whom I shall kiss," I heard a Sunbeam say,  
 "Take him and lead away!"  
 Then, with the Traitor's salutation, "Hail!"  
 He kissed the Dawn-star pale. (L. L., p. 47.)

Two poems, *The Dayspring* (P., p. 39) and *To The Crucifix* (L., p. 122), compare the morning light to the spear with which the side of Christ was pierced.

In *Life's Ramah*, Morn is the Herod who slays our Dreams, and Love is the Rachael who laments them.

Day after day,  
 The Herod Morn  
 Of dreams doth slay  
 The latest born;  
 And Love, like Rachael o'er her dead,  
 Will not again be comforted. (L. L., p. 18.)

We read in *The Suppliant* that the flowers at noon-day call for the morning dew as Dives, when he said, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water to cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." (St. Luke xvi, 24.)

"O dewdrop, lay thy finger-tip  
 Of moisture on my fevered lip,"  
 The Noonday Blossom cries.  
 "Alas, O Dives, dark and deep,  
 The gulf impassable of sleep  
 Henceforth between us lies!" (L., p. 30)

In *Abashed* the Saviour is converted into Day, and St. Peter into Darkness.

The cock crows; and behold the hidden Day—  
 The thrice-denied—appears,  
 And Darkness, conscience-stricken, steals away,  
 His face bedewed with tears. (L. P., p. 18)

In *The Light of Bethlehem* the snow is represented as the flock of which the stars are shepherds. In *Mater Dolorosa* Autumn grieves for dying nature as the Blessed Mother for her Son, expiring on the cross.

Again maternal autumn grieves,  
 As blood-like drip the maple leaves  
 On Nature's Calvary.  
 And every sap-forsaken limb  
 Renews the mystery of Him  
 Who died upon the Tree. (L., p. 90)

The parable of the good Samaritan (St. Luke x, 30-37) furnishes the metaphor in the octet *Neighbor*, in which Night is the good Samaritan who repays the energy, spent by Day, in the Inn of Sleep.

Full many a heedless fellow-man  
 Had passed him on the way,  
 But night, the good Samaritan,  
 Beholding where he lay,  
 Upbore him to the Inn of Sleep,  
 And then I heard him say,  
 "Whate'er the charges of his keep,  
 O Landlord, I'll repay." (L. P., p. 94)

To be included in this group are a few poems, the substance of which, tho scriptural, is subjected to a delightful touch of fancy and humor, of such a kind, however, as does not shock our sense of propriety. In this sphere, assuredly, the poet must be confident of his art; there is but a hairbreadth between the proper and the improper. All admirers of Father Tabb know *The Tax-Gatherer*. Perhaps equally well known and popular, at least among his students, is *The Difference in negro dialect*.

“Unc’ Si, de Holy Bible say,  
In speakin’ of de jus’,  
Dat he do fall seben times a day;  
Now, how’s de sinner wuss?”

“Well, chile, de slip may come to all,  
But den de diff’ence foller;  
For, ef you watch him when he fall,  
De jus’ man do not waller.” (L. L., p. 138)

I have compiled a list of the poems in which passages of the Old as well as the New Testament are made to serve as the medium of expression for the poet’s thoughts, in order to show how general the pattern is.<sup>191</sup>

How, then, should this method of constructing a poem be characterized? That it is clearly defined and that it is consciously followed by the poet with fastidious carefulness seems to me attested by the frequency of its use, its artistic execution, and the appropriateness of the comparisons. The verses which I have already cited for the purpose of illustrating this general division of the poet’s work likewise serve to explain the method. The themes are taken from Nature: the moving waves and the stationary hills; the sun drawing water; sunset; dawn; and the wilted flowers at noon.

The words and imagery are borrowed from the Bible; the shepherds watching their flocks on Christmas eve; the massacre of the Innocents; Mary's weeping at the foot of the cross; Christ's apology for Mary; the betrayal of the Saviour by Judas; the piercing of the Saviour's side with a spear; and the parables of Dives and the Good Samaritan.

The combination of the natural—or the moral or whatever else it may be—the theme of the poem, with the scriptural material—the words and imagery of the verses—is effected by means of the metaphor. The Day is not like Christ nor the Night like St. Peter, but Day is Christ and Darkness is St. Peter. We might almost say that the Biblical passage is taken over verbatim with Day written instead of Christ and Darkness instead of Peter, or we might call the process the superimposition of scriptural phraseology upon a natural event or condition or the absorption of a natural fact in a Biblical passage. However, I prefer to designate the method as the metaphorical application of scriptural material to natural or spiritual phenomena.

It is remarkable, I think, that of this numerous class there are so few poems that can be criticized as "frigid" or marred by "conceits." The poetic metaphors found are not felt as artificial structures, manufactured for the sake of reproducing a certain effect upon the hearer, by splicing together with a rope of resemblance two objects or images from different sources. But they seem rather a natural spontaneous expression of the poet-priest's perception of the phenomena and his peculiar reactions to them. Additional proof against artificiality is furnished by Father Tabb's manner of composition. He always declared that he saw in flashes and that he rarely made a change in the first draft of

the poem. Evidence of the manuscripts and testimony of associates support his statement.

Before I consider how the poet, following the same method, draws the verbal garb of his thoughts and fancies from sources other than the Bible, from the larger field I have called religious, I must dispose of those poems which, tho differing somewhat from the group above, are still related to Holy Scripture.

A modification <sup>192</sup> occurs in a poem like "*Christ's Stilling the Tempest*," in which one Biblical passage is combined with another and explains it. In this particular example, the incident of Christ's stilling the tempest is joined with that of His forgiving Mary Magdalene her sins.

'Twas all she could—the gift that Nature gave,  
The torrent of her tresses—did she spill  
Before His feet; and lo, the troubled wave  
Of passion heard His whisper, "Peace, be still!"  
(L. L., p. 136)

Another variation results from the converse of the general method: instead of the metaphorical application of scriptural material to natural phenomena, natural phenomena are employed metaphorically to illustrate scriptural facts and Christian doctrine. *The Immaculate Conception*, one of the most beautiful epigrammatic expressions of the prerogative of the Mother of God, "Our tainted nature's solitary boast," owes its distinction to this sort of treatment.

A dew-drop of the darkness born,  
Wherein no shadows lie;  
The blossom of the barren thorn,  
Whereof no petal dies;  
A rainbow beauty, passion-free,  
Wherewith was veiled Divinity. (P., p. 90)



*Wild Flowers* gives lyric expression, it seems to me, of the poet's thoughts on the free gift of God's grace and His care for the individual soul.

We grow where none but God,  
Life's Gardener,  
Upon the sterile sod,  
Bestows his care.

Our morn and evening dew—  
The sacrament  
That maketh all things new—  
From heaven is sent:

And thither, ne'er in vain,  
We look for aid,  
To find the punctual rain,  
Or sun, or shade,

Appointed hour by hour  
To every need,  
Alike of parent flower,  
Or nursling seed;

Till, blossom-duty done,  
With parting smile,  
We vanish, one by one,  
To sleep awhile. (L. L., p. 86.)

*The Siren Stream to the Outcast* (L., p. 81), a lyric of remarkable melody, can be interpreted perhaps in no other way than as an invitation of Christ to the sinner to repent of his sins and to return to Him. It brings to mind that wonderful lyric of Francis Thompson's that pictures Christ as the Hound pursuing the soul that

"Fled Him, down the nights and down the days,  
Down the arches of the years."

If the Hound is Christ in Thompson's poem, the Stream is Christ in Father Tabb's. *Faith* (L. L., p. 100)

is another beautiful result of this exchange on the poet's part.

In connection with these Biblical echoes I must content myself with a brief mention of a type of poem that is marked by another use of Scripture. In it the analogies are expressed not thru metaphors but thru similes. Since there is nothing distinctive in such a use of the Bible, a few examples must suffice.

*Vox Clamantis* is a song of the sea, and its title prepares one for the picture the simile presents.

O Sea, forever calling to the shore  
 With menace or caress—  
 A voice like his unheeded that of yore  
 Cried in the wilderness;  
 A deep forever yearning unto deep,  
 For silence out of sound—  
 Thy restlessness the cradle of a sleep  
 That thou hast never found. (L., p. 10.)

*Golden Rod* is fancied as bearing the same relation to autumn as the uplifted rod of Moses bore to the Red Sea.

As Israel, in days of old,  
 Beneath the prophet's rod,  
 Amid the waters, backward rolled,  
 A path triumphant trod:  
 So, while thy lifted staff appears,  
 Her pilgrim steps to guide,  
 The autumn journeys on, nor fears  
 The Winter's threatening tide. (P., p. 69.)

All the poems thus far considered belong to the class that uses scriptural material in one form or other. But there are sources of material other than the Bible, and these I shall now review. No discussion is here necessary, for the method remains the same; the interest lies in the proper classification of the poems according

to the kind of religious material used. The doctrines, sacraments, liturgy, ethics, and devotions of the Church; legends of the saints; and the poet's personal feelings and sentiments with respect to these—all are called upon to clothe the peculiar thoughts that people the poet's vision.

*The Truant*, with its quiet humor and melancholy tone, is an apt illustration. The idea of the Sacrament of Penance has been appropriated with exquisite taste to the rain. The penitent expresses sorrow for his sins and promises not to commit them again. But, as it frequently happens, on account of human weakness, he forgets his promise and returns to the same sin.

Listen! 'tis the Rain  
Coming home again,  
Not as when he went away  
Silent, but in tears to say  
He is sorry to have gone  
With the mist that lured him on;  
And he promises anew  
Nevermore the like to do.  
Alas! no sooner shines the sun  
Than the selfsame deed is done. (L. L., p. 38.)

*Fulfilment* apparently blends the sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist.

No bloom forgotten! but upon each face  
The dew's baptismal, and the selfsame sign  
Of Night's communion, that the fervid gaze  
Of Paschal Morning changes into wine. (L., p. 134.)

*Autumn*, the season of harvest, suggests the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper.

Now at the aged year's decline,  
Behold the messenger divine  
With Love's celestial counter-sign—  
The sacrament of bread and wine. (L. L., p. 75.)

Of the treasures of the elaborate liturgy of the Church Father Tabb has also availed himself.<sup>193</sup> It would have been unaccountable, indeed, if he had not been impressed by the beautiful ceremonies of the Church which have an irresistible appeal even to those not of the fold. Consider the poem *A Rubric*—the very title of which suggests the use of some liturgical feature. In this case the reference is to the purple vestments and pall used during the season of Lent.

The aster puts its purple on  
 When flowers begin to fall,  
 To suit the solemn antiphon  
 Of Autumn's ritual;  
 And deigns, unwearied, to stand  
 In robes pontifical,  
 Till Indian Summer leaves the land,  
 And Winter spreads the Pall. (L., p. 111.)

In *The Postulant*, Evening is pictured as a novice who is about to take the veil of night.

In ashes from the wasted fires of Noon,  
 Aweary of the light,  
 Comes Evening, a tearful novice, soon  
 To take the veil of Night. (L., p. 137.)

*Dawn* recalls both Melchisedech and the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

Behold, as from the silver horn,  
 The sacerdotal Night  
 Outpours upon his latest-born  
 The chrism of the light;  
 And bids him to the altar come,  
 Whereon for sacrifice  
 (A lamb before his shearers dumb),  
 A victim shadow lies.<sup>194</sup> (L., p. 2.)

The remaining poems to which the term religious is applicable are not distinguished by the peculiar metaphorical use of Biblical or ecclesiastical material that I have been examining. They treat a legend or an incident of the life of a saint or a scriptural event in a purely personal and imaginative way. The poet has in these exercised the freedom of his imagination or fancy; needless to say, this manner is legitimate, and, all things considered, is indicative of the poet's personality and mental life.

Many are the legendary accounts of the robin's red-breast. This is Father Tabb's:

When Christ was taken from the rood,  
One thorn upon the ground,  
Still moistened with the Precious Blood,  
An early Robin found  
And wove it crosswise in his nest,  
Where, lo, it reddened all his breast! (L.L., p. 94.)

*St. Mary of Egypt*<sup>195</sup> is the subject of a virile poem, remarkable for its impressionistic word-painting. *Brother Ass and St. Francis*<sup>196</sup> belongs to the category of debates between the body and soul, and its humorous logic has a charm of naive simplicity that is associated with the name of St. Francis. *Christ to the Victim Tree*<sup>197</sup> discloses how deep was Father Tabb's sympathy with nature and how perfectly his imagination vivified inanimate objects. *Christ and the Pagan*<sup>198</sup> affords an example of a number of poems that are the outcome of religious ideas passing thru the alembic of the poet's imagination. In this particular example are found a breadth of view, a tenderness of feeling, and an admirable art in the concise summary of the high points in the religion of paganism that found their realization in Christianity.<sup>199</sup>



Father Tabb was too humorous by nature not to handle even a religious theme with a certain lightness, a certain humor, in no wise, however, profane.

#### THE ANGEL'S CHRISTMAS QUEST

"Where have ye laid my Lord?

Behold I find Him not!  
Hath He in heaven adored,  
His home forgot?  
Give me, O sons of men,  
My truant God again!"

"A voice from sphere to sphere—

A faltering murmur—ran,  
'Behold He is not here!  
Perchance with man,  
The lowlier made than we,  
He hides his majesty.' "

Then hushed in wondering awe,

The spirit held his breath,  
And bowed: for, lo, he saw  
O'ershadowing Death,  
A Mother's hands above,  
Swathing the limbs of Love. (L., p. 118.)

This, however, is not true of *Out of Bounds*. The lowly figure is so audacious as to be dangerously near the improper, if it is not altogether improper and in-artistic. It has elicited from M. S. Pine a page of eulogy wholly incommensurate with the worth of this epigram. "How many thousands," she says,<sup>200</sup> "I wonder, can today repeat, and each time with increasing pleasure, if not with fuller comprehension, the little Christmas verse steeped in the fragrance of Heaven.

A little Boy of Heavenly birth,  
But far from home today,  
Comes down to find his ball, the earth,  
That sin has cast away.  
O comrades, let us one and all  
Join in to get him back his ball! (P., p. 80.)

"It is a sermon," she continues, "or rather, many mission sermons abridged in a wonderful picture. The 'Little Boy,' the Word eternally born in the bosom of the Father; the earth, the ball that He holds in the hollow of His little hand; the monster sin that has cast it away, with the whole human race, so dear to His heart! And the closing soul-cry to us all to become apostles inflamed with boundless zeal to save the souls He has come so 'far from Home' to redeem! but who could translate into words the deep and sublime conceptions this little verse engenders in the heart?"

I confess that I cannot see that this is a Christmas verse except by implication, or that it is a wonderful picture, or that it is steeped in the fragrance of heaven. My blindness to all this is due, I dare say, to too much light. Of course, one ought not to expect a stranger to know local customs. For the skit is based upon what was only an everyday experience in the life of the Junior Division of old St. Charles'. The ball-alley adjoined the eastern end of the main building; near the alley, and running at an angle of about forty-five degrees, began the slope of the hill into the vineyard. This territory was prohibited ground to the Juniors; it was, to speak in the vernacular, *out of bounds*. Nevertheless, there was an exception to this rule. Frequently when the alley was being used lengthwise, a bad hit sent the tiny ball over the hill down into the vineyard. At once one of the players followed it. If he could not find it his companions went to help him. Success almost always rewarded their efforts and the game was continued. As Father Tabb saw this prosaic occurrence time and time again, what was more natural than that he should use this local event in one of his verses? Unfortunately he was not so successful in this instance

as usual in uniting the infinite with the finite. The violation of taste cannot be remedied.<sup>201</sup>

Now I have searched diligently to learn whether other poets of nature transcribed their experiences in Father Tabb's manner, in order to ascertain his own originality or indebtedness to others; and I have found only one poet before him who (in not more than six passages at that) treated natural objects similarly. Oddly enough, this poet was his own friend, Sidney Lanier. Consider Lanier's *Song of the Future*.

#### SONG OF THE FUTURE

Sail fast, sail fast,  
 Ark of my hopes, Ark of my dreams;  
 Sweep lordly o'er the drown'd Past,  
 Fly glittering through the sun's strange beams;  
 Sail fast, sail fast.

Breaths of new buds from off some dying lea,  
 With news about the Future scent the sea;  
 My brain is beating like the heart of Haste;  
 I'll loose me a bird upon the present waste;  
 Go, trembling song,  
 And stay not long; oh, stay not long.

Another example occurs in the lines *To Bayard Taylor*.

Long ere the sun, sweet-smitten through and through  
 With dappled revelations read afar,  
 Suffused with saintly ecstasies of blue  
 As all the holy eastern heavens are—

One more illustration must suffice. In *Sunrise* are found these verses:

Peace to the ante-reign  
 Of Mary Morning, blissful mother mild,  
 Minded of naught but peace, and of a child.

These three illustrations (there are three other passages which make use of some *liturgical* idea) are

enough to have attracted the eye of a keen observer like Father Tabb and to have given the pattern for his own expression. Altho Father Tabb may be allowed to have caught the poetic trick from Lanier, the former should be credited with the distinction I claim for him—the distinction of *developing* a new genre of nature poetry, if not of *contributing* a new genre to English literature.

Only one other poet, and he was a contemporary, has treated a natural theme in this manner. He, it is more than probable, may have been influenced by Father Tabb, for Mrs. Meynell was a common friend enthusiastic about both.

In his *Orient Ode* Thompson borrows the form from the liturgy of the Catholic service known as Benediction to describe the rising of the sun.<sup>202</sup>

Lo, in the sanctuaried East,  
Day, a dedicated priest  
In all his robes pontifical exprest,  
Lifteth slowly, lifteth sweetly,  
From out its Orient tabernacle drawn,  
Yon orb'd sacrament confest  
Which sprinkles benediction through the dawn;  
And when the grave procession's ceased,  
The earth with due illustrious rite  
Blessed—ere the frail fingers featly  
Of twilight, violet-cassocked acolyte,  
His sacerdotal stoles unvest—  
Sets, for high close of the mysterious feast,  
The sun in august exposition meetly  
Within the flaming monstrance of the West.

The foregoing pages have shown how Father Tabb has served the cause of the Church in his poetry. As Father Connor well said in his eulogy at Father Tabb's

funeral, "His religion was not a sentiment, but a service." Mindful perhaps of Herbert's line,

A verse may finde him who a sermon flies,

he does not preach, as Wordsworth often preached, in his poems. On the contrary, he breathes a spirit that kindles our responsiveness. He wins our sympathy and holds us by mingling religion with Nature; he gives us theology, as it were, unintentionally. He arouses our ardor and faith and makes duty pleasant.

Francis Thompson, in one of his essays,<sup>203</sup> remarks that "many learn how little religious verse is anything more than verse, and are repelled rather than attracted by professedly religious poetry." A footnote adds the qualifying explanation: "It is not the presence of religion, but the too prevalent absence of poetry which is the repellant quality." These words also explain why Father Tabb's poetry is so attractive even to those who do not share his religious belief. In the language of the priest he expresses the thought of the poet. Thru the imagination he reaches the mind and finds the soul thru the heart.



## CHAPTER XI

### FAVORITE POETS AND THEIR INFLUENCE

If Father Tabb had been asked to give his opinion of the poets of the eighteenth century, he would have unhesitatingly replied in the words of Keats' *Sleep and Poetry*:

"Ah, dismal-souled!  
The winds of heaven blew, the ocean rolled  
Its gathering waves—ye felt it not. The blue  
Bared its eternal bosom, and the dew  
Of summer nights collected still to make  
The morning precious: Beauty was awake!  
Why were ye not awake? But ye were dead  
To things you knew not of—were closely wed  
To musty laws lined out with wretched rule  
And compass evil." (187 ff.)

For such was his temperament and spiritual attitude that it would have been strange indeed if his literary preference had not been for the romantic poets, if his soul had not found delight and inspiration in the profound thought of Shakespeare, the sensuous poetry of the Greek-loving Keats, the ethereal witchery of Shelley, the mysticism of Coleridge, and the wonderful music of Tennyson, Lanier, and Poe. Born and reared in those days when the South was under the spell of Keats and Shelley, he could not escape becoming an ardent admirer of their supreme genius. Notwithstanding the

fact that he came to know other poets before them, yet as soon as he discovered their work he must have felt somewhat like Keats when he found the Greek world on looking into Chapman's *Homer*, and thereafter he always was their disciple and champion. As he grew older and extended his acquaintance with the literature of England and America, he found other congenial spirits in Coleridge and Tennyson. Among American poets he almost worshipped Poe, whom he considered the first and greatest of our poets, and he enjoyed a life-long friendship with Sidney Lanier, who was perhaps the first to encourage him to poetic utterance.<sup>204</sup>

Few as these names are, they constituted the coterie of poets to whom he swore eternal allegiance and whose honor and prestige he jealously guarded. First, and always first, stood Shakespeare; second, and always second, was Keats; and then came Tennyson, Shelley, Poe, Coleridge, and Lanier.<sup>205</sup> Of this hierarchy the personnel was never altered, altho at different periods in his life the relative position of the last five varied.

This exclusive devotion to a set group, however, had its obvious disadvantages. It made him satisfied with a comparatively few poets, altho with the best treasures of English literature, and kept him from much that is excellent in other poets. For instance, it is probable that he knew nothing but what is contained in Palsgrave's *Golden Treasury* of the poets of the seventeenth century. This was particularly true of Herrick, Crashaw, Herbert, and Vaughan, with all of whom he has frequently been compared. His knowledge of Wordsworth, one whom he certainly should be expected to know intimately on account of their somewhat similar attitude to Nature, was likewise, as a matter of record, of the slightest. Browning, perhaps too careless of

form and too obscure in thought to appeal to Tabb's Greek mind, was known to him only by his *Eurydice to Orpheus*, which he interpreted as "an allegory depicting the unreasoning vehemence of passion at the moment of temptation." To cite one more instance, one from the prose-writers, however, he could never have passed the College Entrance Board Examinations, because he had not read, it is said, any of George Eliot's novels.

First, and always first, of his favorite poets was the Immortal Bard of Avon; but, oddly enough, it was the lyricist that he exalted above the dramatist. Extravagant as were his praises of *King Lear*—in his eyes Shakespeare's masterpiece—*The Tempest*, *Hamlet*, and *Othello*, and frequent as were his quotations from these dramas, he nevertheless subordinated the dramatist that conceived and embodied *Lear* to the lyricist that sang Ariel's songs. His intense admiration for the lyric, "Where the bee sucks there suck I," which he placed before every other lyric in our language, caused him acute pain when he made the discovery that Palgrave had omitted it from his first collection. As Father Tabb wrote at once to Palgrave, it was probably owing to his representations that the latter included the song in the second edition of the *Golden Treasury*.<sup>206</sup>

As to the influence of Shakespeare upon Tabb, it is on the whole rather provocative of thought than stylistic or structural. *Shakespeare's Mourners*,<sup>207</sup> a commonplace sonnet, sketches a group of the dramatist's characters at his grave keeping "vigil o'er the sacred spoils of death." Certain passages in *King Lear* supplied the kernel thought for *For the Rain It Raineth Every Day*, and the following hitherto unpublished poems: *Lear's Fool*, which declares for a solution similar to Hudson's of the sudden disappearance of the

fool; *Through the Sharp Hawthorne Blows the Cold Wind*; and *Niagara*, a rather forced picture of Lear as the torrent pouring his wrath upon Goneril and Regan, the rocks below, while Cordelia, the rainbow, shines above. The Church-yard scene in *Hamlet* was the source of *Yorick's Skull*, the best of all this group, and the queen's words, of the unpublished distich, *Sweets to the Sweet*. *Shakespeare's Key* is a quatrain on the universal appeal of his poetry.<sup>208</sup>

Second only to Shakespeare, in his judgement, stood John Keats. But of all the coterie none exerted a deeper influence than he. There is a significant passage in a letter previously quoted to the effect that he was glad to observe that "nothing is detected of my worship of Keats, whom I know best of the gods." And in a note in his own handwriting made beneath his sonnet *Keats* he speaks of his worship of Keats, "the most adorable of poets." When the Keats-Shelley Memorial was established in Rome, Father Tabb was among the first to contribute. He sent an autographed copy of *Poems* (1894), which contains the poems *Keats-Sappho*, and *To Shelley*, and the sonnet *Keats*.<sup>209</sup> He had read, I feel sure, every verse of the youthful poet that had been published. I infer this from the many quotations that he had at hand from *Endymion* and *Hyperion*, as well as from the couplet from the *Epistle To My Brother George* cited in a letter to Professor Browne. Should there be any wonder, then, that he was thoroly penetrated with the spirit of Keats' art?

Perhaps "the most faithful index of his taste and the most undisputed sovereign of his affections were the two odes, *To the Nightingale* and *To a Grecian Urn*."<sup>208</sup> His usual comment<sup>208</sup> on such lines as

But here there is no light,  
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown

and

Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways,  
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape"

was, "No one but Keats could ever have written that." The source of appeal in Keats' poems, it may safely be stated after a study of Father Tabb's own poetry, lay undoubtedly in that extraordinary combination of voluptuous music and rich imagery which exalts Keats almost to peerage with Shakespeare. Nor is it an exaggeration to claim that Father Tabb often in this matter echoes his master. Consider the close of the first stanza of *An Autumn Leaf*,

Where the breeze  
Blind comrade of the listening trees,  
Came wakening with soft caress  
The shadows dumb and motionless. (L., p. 95.)

*An April Bloom*, with its diction and melody perfectly united to express wonderment and joy, might, especially the first stanza, have been signed by Keats.

Whence art thou? From what chrysalis  
Of silence hast thou come?  
What thought in thee finds utterance  
Of dateless ages dumb—  
Outspeeding in the distance far  
The herald glances of a star  
As yet unseen?

Wast thou, ere thine awakening here,  
In other realms abloom?  
Or swathed in seamless cerements  
Of immemorial gloom,  
Till now, as Nature's pulses move,  
Thou blossomest, a breath of Love,  
Her lips between? (L., p. 102.)



Even his quatrains can in their tiny compass attain this level of poetry, as

#### IN DARKNESS

Dumb silence and her sightless sister Sleep  
 Glide, mistlike, through the deepening Vale of Night;  
 Waking, where'er their shadowy garments sweep,  
 Dream voices and an echoing dream of light. (L., p. 149.)

There is ample evidence of the powerful influence that Keats' sensuousness had upon his imagination and diction, imparting, as it did, a warmth and vividness that often add life to the subject and the manner. It is this power in him to give the glow of life even to the lowly quatrain that fathers the wish that he had written something of length with the same skill and success as *Evolution*. The sonnet *Forecast*, I think, discloses this ability to write sensuously in the best manner of Keats.

All night a rose, with budding warmth aglow,  
 Above a sleeper's dreamful visage hung,  
 Pale with intenser passion than the tongue  
 Of man is tuned to utter. Breathing low,  
 The night winds, fledged with odor, to and fro  
 Went wandering the languid leaves among;  
 While darkling woke a mocking-bird, and sung  
 All echoes that the noonday warblers know.  
 The dream, the song, the odor, each in one  
 Upbreathing as a starry vapor, spread,  
 And from the golden minarets of morn,  
 Far heralding the unawakened sun,  
 A rapture of poesy outshed  
 Upon the spirit of a babe unborn. (L., p. 180.)

To the same quality two other sonnets, *Sappho* (L., p. 115) and *The Petrel* (L., p. 164), unite a tender melancholy that is also a mark of much of Keats' poetry. *At Anchor* (L., p. 165), another sonnet, con-

veys a feeling of quiet and peace which can be almost experienced, so skilfully are the sense-images presented in words. *Glimpses*, with its sympathetic sketching of twilight, has an octet that recalls Keats, altho the sestet reveals how closely Father Tabb at times approached Wordsworth's moralizing attitude to Nature.

As one who in the hush of twilight hears  
 The pausing pulse of Nature, when the light  
 Commingles in the dim mysterious rite  
 Of darkness with the mutual pledge of tears,  
 Till, soft, anon, one timorous star appears,  
 Pale-budding as the earliest blossoms white  
 That come in Winter's livery bedight,  
 To hide the gift of genial Spring she bears.  
 So, unto me—what time the mysteries  
 Of consciousness and slumber weave a dream  
 And pause above it with abated breath,  
 Like intervals in music—lights arise,  
 Beyond prophetic Nature's farthest gleam,  
 That teach me half the mystery of Death.  
 (P., p. 160.)

And do not these verses from his own sonnet of tribute to Keats,

Now tranquil as the twilight reverie  
 Of some dim lake the white moon looks upon  
 While teems the world with silence. Even there,  
 In each Protean rainbow-tint that stains  
 The breathing canvas of the atmosphere,  
 We read an exaltation of thy strains, (P., p. 154.)

particularly the two beginning "Of some dim lake," paint a picture that Keats would not have been ashamed to recognize as his very own? With what masterly cunning he addresses the senses of sight, hearing, and touch in that fragile-like quatrain

## WHISPER

Close cleaving unto silence, into sound  
 She ventures as a timorous child from land,  
 Still glancing at each wary step around,  
 Lest suddenly she lose her sister's hand.

(P., p. 143.)

*Poetry* (P., p. 136), voicing his own conception of the nature of poetry, has the same distinctive sense-appeal.

There is a womanly sympathy and delicacy and tenderness in some of his work that I fancy comes from such a passage in Keats as

"Perhaps the trembling knee  
 And frantic gape of lonely Niobe,  
 Poor lonely Niobe! when her lovely young  
 Were dead and gone, and her caressing tongue  
 Lay, a lost thing, upon her paly lip,  
 And very, very deadliness did nip  
 Her mothery cheeks."

Compare, for instance,

## CONFIDED

Another Lamb, O Lamb of God, behold,  
 Within this quiet fold,  
 Among thy Father's sheep  
 I lay to sleep!  
 A heart that never for a night did rest  
 Beyond its mother's breast.  
 Lord, keep it close to Thee,  
 Lest, waking, it should bleat and pine for me!

(P., p. 107.)

*Quo Vadis* (L. P., p. 52) appears to be related metrically to *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*: in each stanza there are four verses, three of which are tetrameter and the fourth a dimeter, altho the rime schemes differ. Moreover, the sad, haunting mysterious tone of both poems strikes one as identical.

Father Tabb's diction, however, furnishes the most conclusive proof of the influence of Keats.

An examination of the volumes of 1882, 1894, 1897, and 1902 reveals the fact that Father Tabb was so close a student of Keats' remarkable language that he adopted many of his mannerisms. On the other hand, the posthumous volume of 1910 is almost devoid of traces of Keatsian diction. The cause of this difference is not far to seek. In this volume his songs are not of the joyous and beautiful things of nature and man, but of darkness and loneliness and death and the past and religion. Quite naturally, then, a perceptible change of diction accompanies the change in themes. Coming night is casting shadows about the world of his imagination. Turning his vision inward, upon himself, he strikes notes of deep, serious reflection.

But if *Later Poems* affords only negative proof, the other volumes offer indisputable evidence. Who can read

#### A HIDING PLACE

Where lies the *lidded* sleep  
 Throughout the waking hours?  
 Beelike, in the *honeyed* deep  
 Of her favorite flowers,  
 Where the *drowsy drops distill*  
 Dreams the coming night to fill,  
 Or, to soothe the weary brain,  
*Sweet forgetfulness of pain.* (L. L., p. 28.)

or these verses from the *Vision of the Tarn*

Alone in contemplation lost,  
 I stood upon a *castled* height,  
 Dark beetling o'er a lurid tarn  
 That *glassed* the brow of night.

Between the *icy* flash of stars,  
 Above me sprinkled and beneath,  
 The silence of the listening air  
 Was counterfeit of death.

A lily wonderful as light,  
 Unfolded upon the *balmy* deep,  
 And, cradled in its bosom, lay  
 A presence lost in sleep. (1882, P., p. 21.)

without observing such words as lidded, honeyed, drowsy, forgetfulness of pain, castled, glassed, icy, balmy, and without thinking of Keats?<sup>210</sup>

Father Tabb was excessively fond of adjectives terminating in *-y*, as the following list will show: misty, icy, balmy, leafy, fleecy, foamy, dreamy, dainty, airy, starry, fairy, dewy, briny, hoary — found in the volume of 1882; weary, wavy, silvery, shadowy, dusky, wary, 1894, with the others from 1882; wintry, lowly, lonely, 1897, with those mentioned above; momentary, the only new one of 1902; shroudy, stormy, drowsy, lofty — from unpublished poems.

He sometimes converted a noun into a verb: for instance, "*sphere* the desolation" (P., p. 157; cf. Hyp. 1, 117); "*charnelling* a soul's funereal sighs" (P., p. 157; no instance of this use in the N. E. D.); "*psaltering* voice" (P., 1882, Dedication; cf. *psalterian*, Lamia, 1, 114); "*glassed*" (P. 1882, p. 21; cf. glassed champagne, Cap and Bells, 40, 9); "*shrined* divinity" (P., p. 10; cf. Lamia, 2, 190); "*silvered* through" (P., 1882, p. 79; cf. End. 1, 592).

He frequently fashioned from nouns such hybrid participles as the following (cf. Keats' *mountain'd*, *emblem'd*): *fevered* brow (P. 1882, p. 17; L., p. 12; Keats uses this word, but Tennyson is more probably the source here. Cf. Lover's Tale 3, 7); "*billowed* agonies"



(P. 1882, p. 17); "*castled height*" (P. 1882, p. 21; Keats has this word; but Shelley has "*castled mountains*," Pr. Athan. 1, 70); "*lidded Sleep*" (L. L., p. 28; Keats, Highlands, 21); "*honeyed deep*" (L. L., p. 28); *canopied* (L.L., p. 29); *sotted* (L.L., p. 104); *mirrored* (L., p. 26); *widowed* (L., p. 32 and p. 35); *petaled* (L., p. 103); *netted* (L., p. 181); *brimmed* (Unpub. Vapors); *sepulchred* (P., p. 31; cf. Lamia, 2, 95); *bannered* (P. 1882, p. 104); *laurelled* (L., p. 69). *Meekened* (P., p. 169) is the only example of such a participle made from an adjective.

He employed the active participle *parching* in the sense of the passive (L. 60, L. L., p. 2 and p. 124; cf. Ode On a Grecian Urn, 3, 10).

He used the prefix *be* to form such verbs as *benighted* (P. 1882, p. 81; cf. End. 1, 391); *beleagured* (P., p. 166; cf. Keats, Otho II, 2, 28; *bedims* (L. L., p. 17); *bewidowed* (Unpub., *The Indian*).

He revived archaic forms, such as: *fared* (L. L., p. 43; Keats has many instances of this); *opes* (L. L., p. 43; a favorite with Keats); *frighted* (L. L., p. 46; cf. Lamia, 1, 5); *bedight* (P., p. 160; cf. Keats, Sonnet, *As from the Darkening Gloom*, 7); *fledged* (L., p. 180; cf. End. 3, 388); *darkling* (L., p. 180; cf. Ode To a Nightingale, 6, 1); *blood-shotten* (P., p. 159; Keats has the form *blood-shot*, but Shakespeare, *shotten*, 1 Hen. iv, 2, 4, 143); *westerling* (L., p. 162; but this is probably from Milton, Lyc. 31); *shriven* (P. 1882, Ded.) and *cloven* (P. 1882, p. 80), perhaps from Tennyson.

He seems to have liked the termination *-ful*: *doleful* (L., p. 185; Keats, Isab. 12, 5); *changeful* (L., p. 93; Otho 4, 2, 33). Other words, however, of this category have their source elsewhere: *doomful* (Spenser and Carlyle); *voiceful* (P. 1882, p. 79 and p. 109; Cole-

ridge, Fancy in Nubibus, 14): *woeful* doom (P. 1882; p. 81; Shel. Prom. 11, 2, 93); *wistful* (P., 11; Tenn. Gar. and Lyn. 173).

Some of the other words that he learned from Keats are these: *cloyed* (P., p. 15; End. 4, 495); *dalliance* (L., p. 179; End. 3, 439); *dallying* (L., p. 32; End. 3, 117); *dank* (P., p. 8; End. 1, 240); *demesne* (L., p. 119; Chapman's Homer, 6); *faint-smiling* (L., p. 37; End. 1, 990); *lidless* (L., p. 139; End. 1, 598); *o'erbrimmed* (L., p. 92; Ode To Autumn, 1, 11); *palpitating* (P., p. 115; Lamia 1, 45); *reconcilements* (L., p. 72; Otho 1, 3, 121); *trooping* (L. L., p. 26; End. 1, 480); *verdurous* (P., p. 142; Nightingale, 4, 10); *winnowings* (L., p. 37; Keats uses the word as adj., Aut. 2, 4).

When we try to ascertain the exact relation of Father Tabb's poetry to Shelley's, we approach a delicate problem. Instinctively we feel that the poet who could sing with so intense a love and abandon of *The Dews* and *To the Wood Robin* must be signed of the same tribe as the poet who immortalized *The Cloud* and *The Lark*. Who can listen to Father Tabb's *The Dews*,

"The welcome rain to the parching plain  
 And the languid leaves,  
 The rattling hail on the burnished mail  
 Of the serried sheaves,  
 The silent snow on the wintry brow  
 Of the aged year,  
 Wends each his way in the track of Day  
 From a clouded sphere:  
 But still as the fog in the dismal bog  
 Where the shifting sheen  
 Of the spectral lamp lights the marshes damp,  
 With a flash unseen  
 We drip through the night from the starlids bright,  
 On the sleeping flowers,

And deep in their breast is our perfumed rest  
 Through the darkened hours:  
 But again with the day we are up and away  
 With our stolen dyes,  
 To paint all the shrouds of the drifting clouds  
 In the Eastern skies." (L., p. 60.)

without hearing the echo of Shelley's

"I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers,  
 From the seas and the streams;  
 I bear light shade for the leaves when laid  
 In their noon-day dreams.

I wield the flail of the flashing hail,  
 And whiten the green plains under,  
 And then again I dissolve it in rain,  
 And laugh as I pass in thunder.

I sift the snow on the mountains below,  
 And their great pines groan aghast.

And the winds and sunbeams with their convex gleams  
 Build up the blue dome of air."

And are there not clear echoes in Father Tabb's *To the Wood Robin*, despite its obviously more reflective tone, of that supreme lyric *To a Skylark*, the spirit of which I dare say has never been so fully caught and enjoyed by any soul as by Father Tabb who frequently delighted his students by his masterly interpretation of it. The echoes, let us admit, are "echoes of a loftier strain," but they betray kinship.

It is just in this kinship that the true solution of our problem can be found. Very few verbal similarities link the American and English poet. Shelley's influence is, as we might suspect in the case of Father Tabb, rather of the imagination, of the spirit. Both, we might say, were made of the same soul stuff, but each on account of circumstances developed it differently. Both

were able to see Nature thru the same observant eyes and feel the joyousness of all things with equal keenness and endow even the clouds, the air, the moon, the flowers, with a reality and a significance that most of us confine to humanity. Both revelled in the beauty of the world: Shelley in the grander things, Tabb in the lowly and also the religious. How closely their souls were identified may be seen in the *Song*, which, altho written by Shelley, voices the sentiments of Father Tabb's own soul and the spirit of his poetry.

"I love all that thou lovest,  
Spirit of Delight!  
The fresh Earth in new leaves dressed,  
And the starry night;  
Autumn evening, and the morn  
When the golden mists are born.

I love snow, and all the forms  
Of the radiant frost;  
I love waves, and winds, and storms,  
Everything almost  
Which is Nature's and may be  
Untainted by man's misery.

I love tranquil solitude  
And such society  
As is quiet, wise, and good;  
Between thee and me  
What difference? but thou dost possess  
The things I seek, not love them less.

I love Love—though he has wings,  
And like light can flee,  
And above all other things,  
Spirit, I love thee —  
Thou art Love and Life! Oh! come,  
Make once more my heart thy home."

Such was their spiritual affinity that both found in Nature the same powerful attractions to inspire their

songs: sun, moon, and stars; earth, air, and ocean; morning, evening and twilight; birds, flowers, and trees; wind, rain, and snow; and sound, silence, and solitude. These were so many interests that appealed to their own sensitive being, stirred their emotional depths, and impelled their imagination to pour forth those exquisite creations of haunting melody and beautiful imagery. Several passages in Shelley read like a personal declaration on the part of Father Tabb of those objects in Nature in which he had a vital interest, or like a poetic catalog of the subjects of Father Tabb's poetry. The most notable occurs in *Epipsy-chidion* (418-482) and begins with the question

"Say, my heart's sister, wilt thou sail with me?

However similar in sympathy, sensitiveness, and joy their attitude to external Nature was, their attitude to life and the problems of life could not have been more opposed. Father Tabb could never say with Shelley

Misery! we have known each other,  
Like a sister and a brother  
Living in the same lone home,  
Many years—we must live some  
Hours or ages yet to come.

Let us laugh, and make our mirth,  
At the shadows of the earth  
As dogs bay the moonlight clouds,  
Which, like spectres wrapped in shrouds,  
Pass o'er night in multitudes.

All the wide world, beside us,  
Show like multitudinous  
Puppets passing from a scene;  
What but mockery can they mean,  
Where I am—where thou hast been?



## To Shelley's

"All things revive in field or grave,  
And sky and sea, but two, which move,  
And form all others, life and love,"

## Father Tabb answers with

## EARTH'S TRIBUTE

First the grain, and then the blade—  
The one destroyed, the other made;  
Then stalk and blossom, and again  
The gold of newly minted grain.

So Life, by Death the reaper cast  
To earth, again shall rise at last;  
For, 'tis the service of the sod  
To render God the things of God. (P., p. 86.)

Shelley, altho suffering no affliction at all comparable to Father Tabb's blindness, manifests in *Stanzas Written in Dejection* the despair of the unbeliever baffled by the mystery of life. Father Tabb's *Dejection* is a pathetic expression only of the fact that he knew blindness was inevitable and near. To be sure, the priest had his hours of doubt and trial, but, possessing a hope that Shelley had foresworn, he saw with the eyes of faith and resigned himself to the will of his Creator. To Father Tabb life was not a curse, man a being doomed to misery, human institutions sources of evil and oppression, and rebellion and more rebellion the only remedy to the present wrongs and evils, but such these were to Shelley, who, however, sang his best songs when he forgot all his beliefs and theories. The last stanza of *The Hospital Bird* indicates Father Tabb's attitude, as does also the last of *To the Wood Robin*.

"Teach me the power divine  
 Some light o'er dark humanity to fling,  
 Some song of hope celestial to sing,  
 Dear to all hearts as thine." (1882, P., p. 18.)

"Teach me, thou warbling eremite, to sing  
 Thy rhapsody;  
 Nor borne on vain ambition's vaunting wing,  
 But led of Thee,  
 To rise from earthly dreams to hymn Eternity."  
 (L., p. 114.)

Father Tabb has given expression to his admiration for Shelley's genius in several poems, the most significant perhaps being the sonnet

#### SHELLEY

Shelley, the ceaseless music of thy soul  
 Breathes in the Cloud and in the Skylark's song,  
 That float as an embodied dream along  
 The dewy lids of morning. In the dole  
 That haunts the West Wind, in the joyous roll  
 Of Arethusan fountains, or among  
 The wastes where Ozymandias the strong  
 Lies in colossal ruin, thy control  
 Speaks in the wedded rhyme. Thy spirit gave  
 A fragrance to all nature, and a tone  
 To inexpressive silence. Each apart—  
 Earth, Air, and Ocean—claims thee as its own;  
 The twain that bred thee, and the panting wave  
 That clasped thee, like an overflowing heart. (L., p. 186.)

Coleridge, as far as I can discover, had no obvious influence upon Father Tabb. There may be traces here and there of some indebtedness, but they are not at all apparent. This condition, nevertheless, is not what should be anticipated, because Father Tabb could recite the whole of the *Ancient Mariner* and almost all of

*Christabel* without aid of any kind. These two poems and *Kubla Khan* impressed him deeply.

Tennyson, altho ranked below Keats in Father Tabb's hierarchy of poets, wielded nearly as strong an influence as the more youthful poet. Characteristically too, Father Tabb preferred the songs of the *Princess* and the *Idylls* to the philosophic elegy and the romantic epic. He never tired of repeating "*Tears, Idle Tears,*" "*Blow Bugle Blow,*" "*Crossing the Bar,*" or the mournful "*Break, Break, Break.*" The first of these may have suggested *Grief Song*, the opening stanza of which is

"New grief, new tears—  
Brief the reign of sorrow;  
Clouds that gather with the night  
Scatter on the morrow." (P., p. 33.)

The second may have inspired *Bewintered*; the third provoked a parody, *Crossing the Bar*, upon which his own written comment was "Is not this profane?" The fourth, I might say, supplies the fundamental chord of a poem, similarly named, that deserves on account of a certain distinction and universal note to have a place among his best. The two beautiful lyrics, first of all his poetry in the estimation of some, *The Reaper* and *The Half Ring Moon*, are Tennysonian in their exquisite subtlety, partial haziness of phrase, and poignancy of suggestion.<sup>205</sup> The two lines

"Down the dusky slope of noon  
and

"At night, where the new moon loved to be,  
Hangs the half of a ring for me,"

are landscapes characteristically Tennysonian."

The longest poem that Father Tabb has to his credit betrays the unmistakable influence of *The Lady of Shalott*, a favorite source of quotations with him. There is a similarity in tone and mood as well as in the suggested symbolism of the two poems. Both sound a note of melancholy, of sadness for the loss of something precious in the life of the soul. Tennyson's mood has a certain pleasantness about it that is almost idyllic; Tabb's, however, a peculiar grimness that recalls Poe of *The Haunted Palace*.

Four grey walls, and four grey towers,  
Overlook a space of flowers,  
And the silent isle embowers  
The Lady of Shalott.

Compare Father Tabb's description of the towers in the first three stanzas quoted below.

Tennyson portrays the ruin that is brought to the Lady of Shalott when she deliberately introduces human interests into her world of shadows; Tabb, the ruin that devastates the soul of a Nun when she breaks her vow of chastity.

Both the Lady and the Nun lived in a palace. Tennyson pictures it as it was in the lifetime of the Lady of Shalott; Tabb draws a realistic picture of the palace as it is after the event, in ruin, as symbolic of the condition of the Nun's soul.

It stands like Night,  
The sepulchre of a departed light,  
Whose glory gone,  
Each hoary vestige chronicles  
Of crumbling stone.

The portal now,  
 A broken arch majestic, as a brow  
 O'er Evening's eye,  
 Catches an azure glimpse beyond  
 Of fading sky.

On either hand,  
 Grim sentinels, the lofty turrets stand,  
 With many a scar  
 Of Time and tameless Elements  
 That wage his war.

The windows tall  
 Stare blindly from the ivy-shagged wall  
 Of massive power,  
 Stern as the eyeless Nazarite  
 In Gaza's tower.

O'er shattered frieze,  
 O'er buried plinth and capital, the breeze  
 That wanders by,  
 Woos the rank weed, low answering  
 Its plaintive sigh.

Both lived a life of solitude. Tennyson says

And the silent isle embowers  
 The Lady of Shalott.

But who hath seen her wave her hand?  
 Or at the casement seen her stand?  
 Or is she known in all the land,  
 The Lady of Shalott?

and Father Tabb,

Time was, when one,  
 Mild as a maiden star to look upon,  
 Of pensive mood,  
 Here wrought a destiny obscure  
 In solitude.

Both had similar occupations. The Lady of Shalott  
 wove in tapestry the things of life that her mirror re-



flected. The Nun, leading the same life of contemplation, attained thru her high spirituality the knowledge of the oneness of all life.

According to Father Tabb

Each multiform  
Design of earth and ocean,  
Calm and storm—  
  
Spake mysteries,  
Revealing all the harmony that lies  
In things we see:  
Of life and death, the tides of joy  
And misery.

Both lived under a curse. The Lady of Shalott was forbidden to seek knowledge thru any means other than her mirror; the Nun, by her vow, to stain her soul by any sins of the flesh. Compare Tennyson's

She has heard a whisper say  
A curse is on her if she stay  
To look down to Camelot.

with Father Tabb's

The curse was past;  
A sullen vapor silently o'ercast  
The naked Night,  
Till Ruin, hideous with Morn,  
Appalled the sight.

Both were guilty of the forbidden act and suffered the effects of the curse. The contrasts to be observed in the following stanzas hold true for the entire poems: Tennyson's is quiet and peaceful; but Father Tabb's is intensely dramatic, especially in the condensed but powerful sketch of the universal cataclysm of the sin-disrupted soul.

She left the web, she left the loom,  
 She made three paces thro' the room,  
 She saw the water-lily bloom,  
 She saw the helmet and the plume,  
     She looked down to Camelot.  
 Out flew the web and floated wide;  
 The mirror crack'd from side to side;  
 "The curse is upon me," cried  
     The Lady of Shalott.

Compare Tabb's lines,

As to the stainless dewdrops in the grass,  
     But light, alas!  
     A fatal gleam  
 Smote to its own satiety  
     The splendid dream;

    And swift as fire,  
 Doom-driven to the wanton wind's desire,  
     A hurricane  
 Of howling desolation leaped  
     The cloistered brain,

    Wild as the woe  
 That rends the womb of Nature in the throe  
     Of mountain-birth,  
 Shuddered the dome celestial  
     And startled Earth.

    With Echoes torn  
 From raping wrath and agonies of scorn—  
     A demon cry—  
 Lost in this dark contending Cloud  
     Of Destiny.

Father Tabb's friendship for Lanier had a vital spiritual quality which perhaps accounts for the several poetic attitudes that the former adopted in some of his verses. When Father Tabb surprises us by uniting images that originate in different sense-perceptions, as

in *fragrant silence* (L., p. 103), *silence visible* (L., p. 112), *silence cold* (L. L., p. 49), *fragrant light* (P., p. 65), he is doing what Lanier did before him in

## TO BEETHOVEN

In o'er-strict calyx lingering,  
Lay Music's bud too long unblown,  
Till thou, Beethoven, breathed the spring:  
Then bloomed the perfect rose of tone. (1-4.)

and also in

## THE SYMPHONY

From the warm concave of that fluted note  
Somewhat, *half song, half odor*, forth did float,  
As if a rose might somehow be a throat: (95-97.)

Father Tabb's unique nature poetry derives in part, as I have shown, from some scattered passages in Lanier. Two of the former's unpublished poems are likewise modeled on a similar device used by the latter. In these, however, the metaphorical garb of the natural phenomena is not religious but Shakespearean. Lanier borrows from *Othello* in

## NIGHT AND DAY

The innocent, sweet Day is dead.  
Dark Night hath slain her in her bed;  
O, Moors are as fierce to kill as to wed!  
Put out the light, said he. (1-4.)

and in

## THE DOVE

If haply thou, O Desdemona Morn,  
Shouldst call along the curving sphere, "Remain,  
Dear Night, sweet Moor; nay, leave me not in scorn!"

from *Anthony and Cleopatra* in

## EVENING SONG

Now in the sea's red vintage melts the sun,  
 As Egypt's pearl dissolved in rosy wine,  
 And Cleopatra night drinks all. (5-7.)

from *The Tempest* in

## MARSH SONG—AT SUNSET

Over the monstrous shambling sea,  
 Over the Caliban sea,  
 Bright Ariel-cloud, thou lingerest:  
 Oh wait, oh wait, in the warm red West—  
 Thy Prospero I'll be.

and from *King Lear* in

## CORN

Old hill! old hill! thou gashed and hairy Lear  
 Whom the divine Cordelia of the year,  
 E'en pitying Spring will vainly strive to cheer—

Father Tabb borrows his imagery from the same play  
 in the following unpublished poems:

## NIAGARA

On Regan and Goneril—  
 The rugged rocks below—  
 He pours as from the mouth of hell  
 The torrent of his woe:  
 While o'er him, with protecting hands,  
 Cordelia—the rainbow—stands.

and in

## LEAR'S FOOL

A bird that twitters where storm-treachery  
 Hath fanged the oak, whose nest-supporting limb,  
 Death-smitten, droops compassionate for him  
 As for its own unsceptered majesty.

and from *The Tempest* in

## THE WIZARD

Spring-like Prospero thro' all the land  
 Now waves again his magic wand  
 From Winter's long captivity  
 To set the April-blossoms free.

Many too are the echoes of Lanier's thoughts and language in Father Tabb's published work. As such comparisons are more properly placed in a volume devoted exclusively to textual matters, I shall here cite only a few.

Lanier:

## THE BEE

The bee's fanfare,  
 Through sequent files of discourse vague as air,  
 Passed to plain words, while, fanning faint perfume,  
*The bee o'erhung a rich, unrifled bloom:*  
 "O Earth, fair lordly Blossom, soft a-shine  
 Upon the star-pranked universal vine,  
*Hast nought for me?"* (30-36.)

Tabb:

## THE TAX-GATHERER

"And, pray, who are you?"  
 Said the violet blue  
 To the Bee, with surprise  
 At his wonderful size  
 In her eye-glass of dew.  
 "I, madam," quoth he,  
 "Am a publican Bee,  
 Collecting the tax  
 On honey and wax.  
 Have you nothing for me?" (Child Verse.)

Lanier:

## SUNRISE

Now in each pettiest personal sphere of dew  
 The summed morn shines complete as in the blue  
 Big dew-drop of all heaven. (134-136.)



Tabb:

FAITH

In every drop of dew  
To reverence a cloistered star  
Within the distant blue. (L. L., p. 100.)

Lanier:

CLOVER

Tell me, dear Clover (since my soul is thine,  
Since I am fain to give study all the day,  
To make thy ways my ways, thy service mine,  
To seek me out thy God, my God to be),  
Now, Cousin Clover, tell me in mine ear:  
Three-Leaver, instruct me! (50-62.)

Tabb:

CLOVER

Little masters, hat in hand,  
Let me in your presence stand,  
Till your silence solve for me  
This your threefold mystery.

Tell me—for I long to know—  
How in darkness there below,  
Was your fairy fabric spun,  
Spread and fashioned, three in one. (L., p. 105.)

One poet yet remains in this list of literary creditors, a poet Father Tabb always warmly defended against detractors, Edgar Allan Poe. So sincere was his admiration that he wrote at least six poems and epigrams either in defence or praise of this wayward genius. The music of Poe's verse reminded him so much of his favorite Chopin's music that he identified their artistic personalities in a union as happy and true, it seems to me, as his other identification of Keats and Sappho.

## POE-CHOPIN

O'er each the soul of Beauty flung  
 A shadow, mingled with the breath  
 Of music that the Sirens sung  
 Whose utterance is death.

The sympathy he felt for Poe's stormy mental and spiritual life was tenderly expressed in one of his earliest sonnets called *Poe* (L., p. 185). *Poe's Critics* (L. L., p. 137) launches a general attack against all his calumniators, whose efforts, Tabb says, tend only to increase his fame and insure his immortality. When Professor Harry Thurston Peck made his flagrantly unjust and prejudiced criticism of Poe, Father Tabb lost no time in directing a shaft of his keen wit at the professor's vanity. The epigram was sent to the University of Virginia for the Poe Centenary, according to this letter to Professor Gildersleeve, dated January 6, 1908:

## FOR THE POE CENTENARY

His Peck-ability to show,  
 Let Harry Thurston Peck at Poe,  
 And thank his stars like Matthews Brander  
 That Poe is silent now to slander:  
 Or by the scourge with which they score him  
 He'd make them bite the dust before him.

DEAR DOCTOR:

The above has gone to the University of Virginia, and I send this through you to the Hopkins committee. Believe me with kindest greeting,

Cordially yours,

JOHN B. TABB.

The original form, as given by J. M. Tabb (p. 84), was far less effective.

If Harry Thurston Peck at Poe,  
His Peck-ability to show,  
'Tis well for him that such a foe  
No longer can return the blow.

Again when Poe's name failed to appear in the list of Forty Immortal Americans, Father Tabb rushed forward with a clever epigram to explain why his favorite should be excluded.

#### EXCLUDED

Into the charnel hall of fame  
The dead alone should go.  
Then write not there the living name  
Of Edgar Allan Poe.

The memorial exercises held in the University of Virginia on the fiftieth anniversary of Poe's death occasioned the following tribute from Father Tabb, which now hangs in the Poe Room of the University:

TO EDGAR ALLAN POE  
Dead fifty years? Not so;  
Nay, fifty years ago  
Death, obloquy and spite,  
To curse his ashes came.  
But lo, the living light  
Beneath the breath of shame  
Indignant, spurned the night,  
And withered them in flame.

Among the uncollected poems is a quatrain on *Poe's Cottage at Fordham*, which was first published in the *Bookman* for May, 1897. But none of the poems inspired by his love for Poe is at all the equal of *Poe's Purgatory*, which appeared in the *Independent* for March, 1904.

Tributes such as these are but evidence of deeper influence. The highest tribute that we can pay the object

of our love is imitation. *The Miniature* is a standing confession of frank imitation of Poe in atmosphere, theme, development, and diction. The tone is mysterious and weird thruout. The restless conscience recalls *The Tell-Tale Heart*; the repetition of the refrain and the melodramatic "*Beware!*" echo the "*Nevermore*" of *The Raven*; and such phrases as *casement rattled*, *stifled sigh*, *vague pulsations of a heart*, *mystic monotone*, *moaning monody*, *trooping echoes of a formless fear*, *startled phantoms* suggest the tales and some of the poems. *The Ghost Chamber* likewise gives evidence of similar indebtedness on a smaller scale.

This verbal dependence on Poe disappears early in *Father Tabb*, but a more general and more significant influence is to be discovered in the latter's conviction<sup>205</sup> that the "ultimate, perhaps, if we except the dramatic, the only authentic art form is the lyric." Altho the principle enunciated by Poe was by no means original with him, it was his essay on *The Poetical Principle* that induced *Father Tabb* to accept this view, which was as strong and persistent a doctrine in his literary life as the teachings of Rome in his religious life. Poe said: "I hold that a long poem does not exist. I maintain that the phrase 'a long poem' is simply a flat contradiction in terms. \* \* \* This great work (*Paradise Lost*) is to be regarded as poetical only when, losing sight of that vital requisite in all works of art, Unity, we view it merely as a series of minor poems. \* \* \* In regard to the *Iliad*, we have, if not positive proof, at least very good reason, for believing it intended as a series of lyrics."

Having accepted this principle on intellectual grounds, *Father Tabb* was confirmed in it by his own unsuccessful efforts to divert the natural stream of his genius

into the uncongenial fields of "sustained effort." Even if Poe's literary doctrine is seriously heterodox, its very positiveness, nevertheless, helped Father Tabb to find his true artistic medium—the song

Brief to the ear, but long  
To Love and Memory.

## CHAPTER XII

### A TRUE LYRIC POET

O little bird, I'd be  
A Poet like to thee,  
Singing my native song—  
Brief to the ear, but long  
To Love and Memory.<sup>211</sup>

So modest a wish has rarely fallen from the lips of any poet conscious of his power. But they are Father Tabb's own words and should preface every study made of his poetry. They are the cornerstone upon which he built all his work, the guiding principle which he followed thruout his whole poetic career. No truer words did he ever utter about himself or more illuminating with respect to what he conceived to be his mission as a poet. As conscious of his poetic ability as Wordsworth, he was far more humble and less ambitious. Feeling within himself the divine urge to sing, he poured forth his soul in those matchless brief lyrics that are the glory of the true poet and the despair of those not to the manner born.

"Brief to the ear"—this is what makes his poetry unique. Brevity, the most obvious characteristic of his poems, sets him as one apart among poets of acknowledged excellence and undying fame. "The poems exceeding the measure of the sonnet," asserted one of his most appreciative critics,<sup>212</sup> "were exceptional." An-



other critic said, "Tabb sings his own songs in his own way, and there are no songs quite like them." I have noted elsewhere the few poems that are of any length. This particular feature has misled some reviewers and critics to stress the comparison of his poems, on account of their perfection, to exquisite gems and cameos and, overlooking the fine inspirational quality of his art, to deny him the lyrical gift.

Altho his poetry is unique, it is none the less true poetry. Whether tested by Mill's definition, "Poetry is thought colored by strong emotion, expressed in metre, and overheard"; or by Shairps' "Poetry is the expression in beautiful form and melodious language of the best thoughts and noblest emotions which the spectacle of life awakens in the finest souls"; or by Wordsworth's "Poetry is emotion remembered in tranquillity," his poetry is genuine. It responds, also, to a more practical criterion, and one evident to all. It finds an echo, as Professor Gildersleeve expressed it, in the human heart. It appeals, as all the best poetry does, in a subtle way to the interior life of each of us and uncovers our own experience, thoughts, and feelings, to which we have been unable to give fitting or adequate expression. Consider the universality of the simple verses

#### COMPENSATION

How many an acorn falls to die  
For one that makes a tree!  
How many a heart must pass me by  
For one that cleaves to me!

How many a suppliant wave of sound  
Must still unheeded roll,  
For one low utterance that found  
An echo in my soul. (P., p. 41.)

As a consequence of its human appeal his work lends itself readily to memory and quotation, and fulfills his desire—"Long to Love and Memory." Not only do the lovers of his work confess his poetic ability, but his critics also never deny him the divine spark. In one passage Dr. Mather says:<sup>213</sup> "For sheer lapidary perfection he has no mate among American poets or English poets of his time"; and in another, "He is one of the most engaging figures in poetry."

Mrs. Meynell expressed herself thus:<sup>214</sup> "And our common language has had, in the centuries that include George Herbert and John Tabb, nothing quite like these two for simplicity and for security, if I may give that name to the lovely confidence of a poet in his own dignity, needing no effort, admitting no pretence, not anxious even to conceal art—nay, confessing it with exquisite pleasure in the success of thought, in the success of style. In Tabb I find the extreme sensitiveness of poetry, I perceive in him the pierced and contrite heart of the poet." Professor Gildersleeve, no inexperienced judge of literary achievement, also confidently declared, "Father Tabb will live as long as Her-rick."

But what is to be thought of the statement made by Dr. Mather that "the term lyrics seems a misnomer applied to Father Tabb's poetry and that elaborately musical as his verse is, it has little singing quality, and no free or spontaneous gush of song?" This is an opinion which I cannot accept in the light of what appears to me as facts and of what other competent critics have said. Dr. Mather has allowed, I fear, his own intellectual admiration for Father Tabb's peerless constructive power in petto to obscure the emotional note and the reaction he himself undoubtedly experienced,

or else he has been too strict in his interpretation of the one condition, namely, spontaneous gush of song. Were this condition the *sine qua non* of lyrics, English literature should be forced to discard many of the lyrics it has treasured. The sonnet, for instance, which is one kind of lyrical poetry, according to the usual acceptation of the term, would, if subjected to this test, have to be rejected at once.

This condition, however, may properly be imposed upon that other class of lyrics known as songs, or short lyrics written specially for singing, such as *Drink to me only with thine eyes*, *Blow, blow thou winter wind*, *Why so pale and wan, fair lover?* Now Father Tabb, I contend, wrote some lyrics for singing. It does not follow, however, that because all he wrote are not songs, he is no lyricist. Take up any volume of his serious work and see whether it does not contain such lyrics as sing themselves altho they are not called songs. As a matter of fact, only a few are labeled song. They are as follows: *Slumber-Song* (L., p. 29), *Brink-Song* (L. L., p. 50), *Matin-Song* (L. L., p. 51), *Moon-Song* (L.L., p. 52), *Grief-Song* (P., p. 33), *Fern-Song* (P., p. 72), *Cradle-Song* (P., p. 106). But of a singing quality equal to that of the *Fern-Song* and the *Moon-Song*, and *The Song* (Fade yet not, O Summer Day) are to be counted lyrics whose titles give no indication that they are songs, such as the following: *Wood-Grain* (This is the way that the sap-river ran, L. L., p. 25); *Clouds* (Born of the waters are we, L. L., p. 34); *Robin* (Come to me, Robin! The Daylight is dying, P., p. 8); *Westward* (And dost thou lead him hence with thee, O Setting Sun, P., p. 4); *The Siren Stream to the Outcast* (Come, for my waves what I can never know, L., p. 81); *The Dews* (We come and go, as

the breezes blow, L., p. 60) ; *One April Morn* (Twin violets amid the dew, L., p. 93) ; *The Dead Thrush* (Love of nest and mate and young, L., p. 115). Additional proof is furnished by the actual setting of Father Tabb's verses to music by well-known musicians, who have with no difficulty at all and with decided success wedded his poetry to music.

If Dr. Mather had heard Mr. Howard Brockway's musical setting of the *Mocking Bird*, he would probably have thought differently of Father Tabb's lyrical power. The same composer has written the music for the *Water Lily*, the *Fern-Song*, *Half Ring Moon*, *Intimations*, and the *Humming Bird*. Mr. Fairchild has also set to music *Content*, *Intimations*, and *Grief-Song*; and Mr. Edwin L. Turnbull, one of the poet's friends, *The Reaper*, *To a Rose*, and *One April Morn*. Mr. Frank J. Daniel, organist at St. Peter's Cathedral, Scranton, Pa., is responsible for a beautiful arrangement of *My Star*, which was published in the *Pictorial Review*. Here I may likewise cite an interesting discovery by Father Connor, a capable musician, who quite accidentally found that altho Father Tabb's *The Water Lily* and Macdowell's *Water Lily* are presumably independent compositions, yet the former's poem can be sung to the latter's music without any revision or forcing and that the meaning of the one is only helped and accentuated by the accompaniment of the other.<sup>216</sup>

As for those lyrics that cannot be classed as songs, they are none the less for that reason truly lyrical. They are intended to voice primarily and directly the personal emotion felt by Father Tabb, or his emotional thoughts on the things that interested him in life and in men.

As long as this fundamental requirement is observed, no reason exists for denying the result to be a lyric. It may be granted, however, that the worth and success of the lyric are to be judged by the presence or absence of certain other qualities generally considered necessary.

Sincerity is one of the notes of all Father Tabb's best work. If it is true, as it is charged by some, that he played with words to show his cleverness and skill, yet he cannot be accused of hiding the fact that he was playing. He almost proclaimed it; *Child Verse* is full of artificial puns and such word-play. But no one, least of all he himself, would rest his case for fame upon this volume. Moreover, if he indulged at times in conceits which remind us of the so-called metaphysical poets of the seventeenth century, he never offended by using such extravagant images and far-fetched comparisons as marred their poetry, and he seldom forced a figure upon an idea or emotion. What can be more sincere than *Compensation* or *Whisper* or *Fraternity*, to mention only the first that come to mind? The intense seriousness of the poet's attitude to life is sufficient guarantee for the presence of this quality.

Added to this is the note of universality that carries the experience of the individual into the region of the universal, so that we each and all can say, "That is what I have felt often but have never been able to express." *Compensation* gives poignant expression to a truth that has often been brought home to us in our search after perfect friendship. *The Captives*, "suggested," as a note in his own hand tells us, "by a Point Lookout experience, where I first heard Lanier's flute," has been raised to the plane of the universal, for it is the lot of many, as it was that of Tabb and Lanier, to live apart and yet remain steadfast in love.



Apart forever dwelt the twain,  
Save for one oft-repeated strain  
Wherein what Love alone could say  
They learned and lavished day by day.

Strangers in all but misery  
And music's hope-sustaining tie,  
They lived and loved and died apart,  
But soul to soul and heart to heart. (P., p. 29.)

With an echo of Shelley and perhaps of Coleridge, *To the Summer Wind* takes us all back to those days of childhood gone forever together with many of our playmates.

Art thou the selfsame wind that blew  
When I was but a boy?  
Thy voice is like the one I knew,  
And yet the thrill of joy  
Has softened to a sadder tone—  
Perchance the echo of my own.

Beside a sea of memories  
In solitude I dwell:  
Upon the shore forsaken lies  
Alas, no murmuring shell!  
Are all the voices lost to me  
Still wandering the world with thee? (P., p. 43.)

The note of sadness struck here and there and generally present in all great poetry is again evident in *Recognition*, which records the inexplicable subtle attraction that may unite two persons for the time being or permanently, altho they have never met.

At twilight, on the open sea,  
We passed, with breath of melody—  
A song, to each familiar, sung  
In accents of a foreign tongue.



We could not see each other's face,  
Nor through the growing darkness trace  
Our destinies: but brimming eyes  
Betrayed unworded sympathies. (P., p. 34.)

The third quality demanded of the lyric is one of the most distinctive marks of all Father Tabb's work. His ability to say much in little, to suggest whole worlds of thought by a single word or phrase, has been acknowledged by all his critics. His brevity stands in strong contrast with the diffuse style of most of his contemporaries or predecessors, particularly of the South. Vain is the search after verbiage in Tabb, because he practiced relentless parsimony of diction. Possessed of one idea or emotion, he sought to rid it of all irrelevant details and to reduce it to its simplest elements and to record it in as few words consistent with clearness as he could. Swinburne therefore never appealed to Father Tabb, not merely because he "sang of the worst so well," but rather because he cultivated rhetorical amplification to excess and thereby diluted his thought. "Tabb," says an anonymous reviewer,<sup>217</sup> "avoiding packing and elaboration, is full of significance. Contrast the long, voluminous rushing flow of Lanier with the minute delicately carved work of Tabb. Father Tabb, working within the limits which the nature of his art inevitably determined, piping, so to speak, upon his flute, can do things which Lanier's great four-manual organ could never accomplish." Is more concentrated thought possible than the summary of nineteenth-century philosophy with its Christian modification in *Evolution*?

Out of the dusk a shadow,  
Then, a spark;  
Out of the cloud a silence,  
Then, a lark;

Out of the heart a rapture,  
Then, a pain;  
Out of the dead, cold ashes,  
Life again.<sup>218</sup> (P., p. 25.)

The ringing Christian note of the last two lines is indicative of the whole tenor of Father Tabb's poetry. Tho at present a fixed place in American literature cannot be assigned him, a place that will be recognized as ultimate in the judgement of the generation a hundred years hence, it can be confidently predicted that he will always occupy a unique position. I shall not attempt here an analysis of the various qualities of his poetry. To make an adequate summary, and nothing more, would extend this chapter beyond its limits and would anticipate part of my contribution to the *Collected Edition of Father Tabb's Works*, which is now in preparation. What can be said here is that he belongs to the general movement characterized as the revival of the Catholic spirit in modern English literature,<sup>219</sup> and that he stands first among those who have contributed to it on the American side.



APPENDIX I.  
UNCOLLECTED POEMS



## UNCOLLECTED POEMS

From the *Atlantic Monthly*

### CHORISTERS

O wind and waters, ye alone  
Have chanted the primeval tone  
    Since Nature first began.  
All other voices change, but ye  
Abide, the soul of harmony  
    Interpreting the man.

He listens, and his heart is fain  
To fashion an immortal strain;  
    Yet his sublimest lay  
Is but the music of a tongue  
Attuned to silence, and among  
    The echoes dies away.

Sept., 1903, p. 383.

### OUR FIRST-BORN

It died so young! and yet,  
Of all that vanished hence,  
Is none to lingering regret  
    So lost as Innocence:

For wheresoe'er we go,  
    Whatever else remain,  
That Favorite of Heaven, we know,  
    We shall not find again.

Jan., 1905, p. 105.



## MUTATION

Till comes the crescent Moon,  
 We worship each a Star;  
 But in the region of Noon,  
 Alike forgotten are  
 The lesser and the larger light  
 That ruled the destinies of Night.

Anon, the darkness near,  
 Within their dim domain  
 To Memory appear  
 The twilight Gods again;  
 And Reverence beneath their sway  
 Forgets the Sovereignty of Day.

Oct., 1905, p. 449.

## THE IMAGE-MAKER

"Thou shalt no graven image make;"  
 And yet, O sculptor, for the sake  
 Of such an effigy as I—  
 The superscription like the face  
 Disfigured now, and hard to trace—  
 Didst thou thyself consent to die.

Jan., 1909, p. 129.

## SUNDERED

Thou sleepest sound, and I  
 Anear thee lie,  
 Yet worlds apart:  
 Thou in the light of dreams;  
 I, where the midnight seems—  
 An ashen sea—  
 From this my world and that wherein thou art  
 To blot out all but me.

March, 1908, p. 423.

ANIMULA VAGA

A spirit from the grave  
 Again I come,  
 E'en as I vanished, save  
 Disrobed and dumb.  
  
 No shadow as I pass—  
 However clear  
 The wave on mirroring glass—  
 Betrays me near;  
  
 Nor unto them that live  
 Forlorn of me,  
 A signal can I give  
 Of sympathy.  
  
 Ah, better 'twere to hide  
 Where none appear,  
 Than thus in death abide  
 To life so near!

Aug., 1907, p. 245.

From the *Bookman*

POE'S COTTAGE AT FORDHAM

Here, where to pinching penury the gloom  
 Of Death was wedded, came Immortal Love,  
 And Genius, with all the pomp thereof,  
 To consecrate a temple and a tomb.  
 May, 1897, p. 216.

AUGURY

Before the dawn, 'tis light,  
 If Hope the vigil keep;  
 Before the noon-tide, night,  
 Of Woe, despairing, weep:  
 The Future 'tis that shows  
 What now the present knows.  
 June, 1897, p. 290.

## UNDERTOW

In boreal calm the spirit feels  
 A far-off thunder-roll,  
 And through each tropic passion steals  
 A current from the pole. Oct., 1897, p. 138.

## DAWN

Love told a Star the vision that beguiled  
 His slumber; and the Darkness, hearing, smiled.  
 Nov., 1898, p. 221.

Father Tabb's comment upon Mr. Punch's recent remarks on the subject of poetical feet:

## A FOOT-RULE

When a poet gives his *hand*,  
 Meet it is to greet the greeter.  
 When his *feet* in question stand,  
 It is *metre*. May, 1902, v. 222.

From the *Century Magazine*

## SIGNALS

The prophet Star, the Maiden Dawn, the Sun—  
 So light begins his reign;  
 Then Sunset, widowed Twilight, and anon  
 The prophet Star again. July, 1904, p. 469.

From the *Cosmopolitan Magazine*

## IMPORT

Thou hast the final touch supplied  
 That till thy coming was denied—  
 A single letter in a word  
 Whose absence all the context blurred;  
 A missing note that, but for thee,  
 Had marred the perfect harmony.  
 Oct., 1909, p. 617.

THE VAMPIRE MOON

The vital vapors to absorb,  
 The moon, with famished gaze,  
 Suspends her lean, malignant orb  
 Above a dying face.

I watch her like a folded flower,  
 As silently expand  
 The pulses waving hour by hour  
 And heavier the hand,

Till she hath brimmed her cup; and I  
 An empty chalice hold;  
 My heart, in agony, as dry,  
 In wintriness as cold.

Feb. 1910, p. 368.

SUFFICIT

We are alone!  
 The night-winds moan  
 For envy, and the sobbing rain  
 Protests in vain.  
 How deep their darkness! But our night,  
 Than day more bright,  
 Needs not the glimmering orbs above,  
 But only Love.

April, 1905, p. 728.

IN TOUCH

How slight soe'er the motion be,  
 With palpitating hand  
 The gentlest breaker of the sea  
 Betrays it to the land.

And though a vaster mystery  
 Hath set our souls apart,  
 Each wafture from eternity  
 Reveals thee to my heart.

April, 1909, p. 749.

From *Harper's Monthly*

## TIDES

Like inland streams, O Sea,  
Thro' joy and pain  
All nature dreams of thee;  
Nor more appears  
Thy life in mist or rain  
Than in our tears.

July, 1909, p. 244.

## NIGHT-BORN

The fairest blossom of the light  
Was nurtured in the womb of Night,  
An alien to the Sun;  
And to her bosom must she need  
Recall each love-selected seed,  
When blossom-time is done.

And we—by baptism of sleep  
Her children—waken but to keep  
The memory of charms  
And promises, that ne'er too soon  
Despite the blandishments of Noon  
Restore us to her arms.

Sept., 1909, p. 610.

From *Harper's Weekly*

## ALFRED TENNYSON

The lordliest at Arthur's Table Round  
No loftier than thou,  
The laureate, with England's glory crowned,  
Whom Death has knighted now.      Nov. 5, 1892.

From the *Independent Weekly*

AUTUMN-GLOW

If this the preface be of death  
 In crimson, green, and gold,  
 What wondrous art illumineth  
 The story still untold?      Nov. 15, 1900, p. 2728.

VICTORIA

Now from the throne of England one is borne,  
 Whom all men mourn,  
 Nor more as queen, than for the life that stood  
 The type of Motherhood.      Jan. 31, 1901, p. 244.

MY SERVANT

Lord, wheresoe'er I am, Thou art,  
 In love subservient to me,  
 Still tendering a lowlier port  
 Than saint or angel unto me.  
Jan. 8, 1903, p. 96.

JACET LEO XIII

"Behold the aged Lion, Lord,  
 I am,  
 Now come to lay me down  
 Beside the Lamb."      Aug. 6, 1903, p. 1843.

From *Lippincott's Magazine*

A CARCANET

I give thee, love, a carcanet,  
 With all the rainbow splendor set,  
 Of diamonds that drink the sun,  
 Of emeralds that feed upon



His light as doth the evergreen,  
A memory of spring between  
This frost of whiter pearls than snow,  
And warmth of violets below  
A wreath of opalescent mist,  
Where blooms the tender amethyst;  
Here, too, the captives of the mine—  
The sapphire and the ruby—shine,  
Rekindling each a hidden spark,  
Unquenched by buried ages dark,  
Nor dimmed beneath the jeweled skies,  
Save by the sunlight of thine eyes.

Oct., 1885, p. 347.

From the *Pilot*

#### THE FURLOUGH

"Home!" he said; and westward turning  
Looked upon the setting sun.  
"Heed thee, child!" a sentry muttered,  
"Safety on the ramparts none."  
"Naught I fear," the boy made answer,  
"Battle shock nor random gun;  
Homeward all my heart advances,  
Victory's won!"

In his eyes the light of morning  
Met the slow-declining day,  
Where the bow of peace expanding,  
Lit with hope's celestial ray—  
Born of sunshine, cloud-engendered,  
Sorrow washed in tears away—  
"Strife to holy calm surrenders,"  
Seemed to say.

Fair he stood, as in a vision;  
When, with sudden cry of dread,  
Forward sprang each sturdy comrade  
To support the fallen head—  
Swift a thirsty flash, unerring,  
To the font of life had sped!

Calm he lay. We bent above him,  
 "Home he goeth," some one said.  
 With the dew our tears were falling  
 O'er the dead. JOHN B. TABB.

From *Scribner's Magazine*

WAVES

We sighed of old till underneath His feet  
 Our pulses beat,  
 Again to sigh in restlessness until  
 He saith, "Be still."  
 And with us is the ever-moving wind,  
 And all mankind—  
 A triple chorus—each upheaving breast,  
 A sigh for rest. March, 1909, p. 308.

From the *Spectator*

TO THE FREEDMAN

Friend of the dusky visage, whereupon  
 When all things else have yielded to the light  
 Abides the cleaving shadow of a night  
 The darker for the noonday's fiercer sun;  
 Among earth's kindred nations nearer, none  
 Than thine and mine. Thou standest in the fight,  
 A slave beside a master for whose right  
 Thine arm, with his uplifted, lost or won.  
 Nay; now the victor vanquished, when the foe  
 Exulting in a land of bondage free,  
 Flung out the signal, "Smite the smiter!" lo,  
 Thou wouldst not; but with new-wed Liberty  
 Wentest thy way—nor yet as glad to go,  
 But oft in tears that all the world might see.  
 April 6, 1895, p. 464.

From the *Sunday School Times*

### THE JEWESS

A mother she in Israel,  
With eyes, like Jacob's well,  
Untouched by time—their tender grace,  
As from the Temple's inmost place,  
Telling the twofold mystery  
Of Eden and Gethsemane.                      March 7, 1891.

### REPOSE

I laid me down in solitude, but not alone:  
The night was with me, and the stars above me shone;  
The Earth, my mother, pillowed me, and to her breast  
I nestled as a weary child that yearns for rest.  
The drowsy ripple of a stream that murmured near  
With lisping leaves made lullaby to soothe mine ear;  
But o'er the mystery of calm my brooding mind  
Hung as an eagle motionless upon the wind,  
Till stirred with energy of thought, on pinions strong,  
Through swift-receding centuries it swept along,  
Far out of space and period, where yet of time  
No wave had drifted to disturb the depth sublime.  
Then, lo! from vastness infinite, one lonely ray  
Gleamed, trembling in its solitude, upon the way,  
And through the region measureless, a whisper came—  
A thrill of hidden majesty that breathed my name:  
"Yon beam upon immensity that breathed my name:  
From all eternity hath been thy dwelling, Man.  
There wast thou, ever intimate, a thought of Him—  
The One-Intelligence—that spans the ages dim.  
The time, the place, all influence prevailing here,  
In pregnant lineament conceived, was imaged there;  
For in the mystic harmony of Nature kind,  
These kindred elements fulfil a chord designed,  
The shadows that encompass thee, the soothing sleep,  
The swathing dreams elysian, the silence deep,  
All speak one calm Original, whose power divine

Hath wrought for them a destiny that measures thine;  
 For all to man are ministrants of heavenly love,  
 Out-breathings from the Fountain-head of rest above."  
 January 14, 1893.

THE CHILD ON CALVARY

The cross is tall  
 And I too small  
 To reach His hand  
 Or touch his feet.  
 But in the sand  
 His footprints I have found,  
 And it is sweet  
 To kiss the holy ground.                      Sept. 2, 1889.

A TRAVELLER'S GUIDE

This is the way to Lullaby Town,  
 To Lullaby Town, to Lullaby Town—  
 First go up, and then go down:  
 This is the way to Lullaby Town.

Folks that go to Lullaby Town,  
 To Lullaby Town, to Lullaby Town—  
 Travel each in a snow-white gown;  
 This is the dress for Lullaby Town.

Dreams have homes in Lullaby Town,  
 In Lullaby Town, in Lullaby Town—  
 Dreams that *smile*, for never a frown  
 Enters the gates of Lullaby Town.      March 10, 1900.

LEAF AND SOUL

LEAF

Let go the Limb,  
 My life in him  
 Alone is found.  
 Come night, come day,  
 'Tis here I stay  
 Above the sapless ground.

## FATHER TABB

## SOUL

Let go the warm  
 Lip-kindled form,  
     And upward fly?  
 Come joy, come pain,  
 I here remain,  
     Despite the yearning sky.

A sudden frost—and lo!  
 Both Leaf and Soul let go.

November 15, 1902.

## SEEMING FAILURE

O wave upon the strand!  
 What urges thee in vain  
 To lift the baffled hand  
 In suppliance again?

“The passion that impels  
 The tidal energies  
 In every bud that swells,  
 In every soul that sighs:

“The same that on the cross  
 Sustained the dying Christ,  
 When Love for seeming Loss  
 Alone was sacrificed.”

May 2, 1903.

## THE DYING BOY TO THE WIND-FLOWERS

And have ye come again,  
 Dim seedling of the Dew?  
 Long waiting have I lain  
 In wintriness like you,  
 Through many a month of pain,  
 And wondered if ye knew:

And whether ye, unchanged  
 Despite the sundering snow,  
 When back to light ye ranged,  
 My altered face would know,  
 Or deem the heart estranged  
 That late had loved you so.

But now with glances sweet  
 Ye've wandered back today,  
 Your lagging friend to meet,  
 And chide his long delay.  
 Behold, with willing feet  
 I follow! Lead the way!

Feb. 15, 1896.

From the *Youth's Companion*

WILD FLOWERS

As whispers for a moment rest  
 Upon the brink of sound,  
 Here fragrant breezes blossom drest,  
 Half-visible are found.

June 7, 1894, p. 264.

COBWEBS

A net to catch the earliest gleam  
 Of westward swimming light;  
 On hammock of the latest dream  
 That left the shores of night.

Dec. 13, 1894, p. 606.

THE PRECIPICE

Above the fathomed deep  
 Of Death, we move in sleep,  
 And who among us knows  
 How near the brink he goes?

Dec. 27, 1898, p. 634.



## THE TOUCH-ME-NOT

So ticklish is my skin  
That if you touch my side  
The little seed within  
Will laugh, and split me wide.

So, when I see you near  
The mirth-provoking spot,  
No wonder that I fear,  
And bid you touch-me-not.

Nov. 10, 1904, p. 260.

## CHRISTMAS GREETING

Good morning, Lord! For little boys  
The Day more generous to joys  
Than unto men, they say;  
If so, for greater happiness  
Teach us Thy holy name to bless  
With fuller hearts than they.

Dec. 27, 1906, p. 669.

## MOUNTAIN-BORN

How hast thou, little spring,  
The heart to sing,  
Leaving thy lofty home  
For yonder plain,  
Whence ne'er again  
Returning canst thou come?

"Nay not as now I go;  
But mute as snow,"  
The laughing wave replies;  
"To crown the height,  
In vapors white  
Again I nightly rise."

June 20, 1907, p. 300.

MY SOUL

In my body bides a guest,  
Time-born for Eternity—  
Ne'er to mortal manifest;  
To my very self unknown;  
Visible to God alone,  
And revealing Him to me.

June 27, 1907, p. 312.

From Unidentified Papers

GOOD FRIDAY

Behold in every crimson glow  
Of earth and sky and sea,  
The Hand that fashioned them doth show  
Love crucified for me.

HEREDITY

The children of the night,  
The star, the glowworm bright,  
The dewdrop clear,  
In livery of light  
Undimmed appear.

The children of the Day,  
The cleaving shadows gray,  
Wan vigils keep,  
Twice on their twilight way  
His doom to weep.

TO A DROP OF POISON

As once, the seal of Solomon beneath,  
The Genius in bonds, rebellious lay;  
So lieth here a mightier captive Death,  
Fate-bound his fond deliverer to slay.

## IN SHADOW

Heeds yonder star thy song,  
O warbler of the night?  
"I know not, for the way is long  
That leads unto the light.  
But as the music of the spheres,  
A twinkling silence here appears,  
Perchance my warbling from afar  
Appears a star."

## SUBMISSION

Since to my smiting enemy  
Thou biddest me be meek,  
Lo, gladlier, my God, to Thee  
I turn the other cheek.

## From Other Sources

## GENEVIEVE

Genevieve was all to me,  
Heart to heart we toiled together;  
Shade in summer heat was she,  
Sunshine in the cloudy weather.  
Now alas, no more to me,  
Genevieve is dead.

Genevieve was fair as May,  
Eyes that dreamed the light of heaven,  
Locks whereon the life beams lay;  
E'en in death to her were given  
Sunshine sped in clouds away,  
Genevieve is dead.

Genevieve, not all in vain  
Fell thy sands of life before me,  
Hope in every golden grain,  
Star-like glimmers to allure me  
To a life beyond the main,  
To a love not dead.

From Mr. Edwin L. Turnbull's Songs.

STABAT MATER

In the shadow of the rood,  
Broken-hearted there she stood  
Near her Son and Lord;  
While her soul, His doom lamenting,  
Yet in sacrifice consenting,  
Felt the cleaving sword.

Thou alone no ransom needing,  
Let thy Son, the Victim bleeding,  
For my sin atone;  
What for me, my God and Brother  
Deigns to bear, O sinless Mother,  
Lean not thou alone.

To the lash, for sin atoning,  
Lo, He bows! and thou, O moaning  
Mother, now must see  
Limb from limb His spirit languish,  
And His latest looks of anguish,  
Turned in love to thee!

Came there ever to another  
Grief like thine, O wounded Mother,  
As thou lookest upon  
Him, the Son of God, all holy,  
And of thee, a virgin lowly,  
Sole-begotten Son?

Who so lost to human feeling  
As to hide his tears revealing  
Sympathy with thine?  
Who that e'er was born of woman,  
In a tenderness so human,  
Sees not love divine?

Let me near the fountain growing  
Of thy tenderness o'erflowing,  
Drink my fill thereof;  
Let the fervid flames illuming  
All thy soul, a fire consuming,  
Kindle mine to love.

One with thee, my vigil keeping;  
One with thee, the mourner, weeping  
Near His sacred side,  
Where thy soil in desolation  
Waits of woe the consummation,  
Let my soul abide.

Virgin, earth's divinest blossom,  
Spurn not from thy fragrant bosom  
Dews that fall for thee!  
Make me, near thy Son remaining,  
Simon-like, His cross sustaining,  
One in sympathy!

Let me from His life-distilling  
Wounds, mine empty chalice filling,  
Quaff the crimson wine;  
Let the flames, devouring, end me,  
In thy chastity defend me,  
From the wrath divine.

Lord, through her who brought Thee hither,  
Let me, hence departing whither  
Thou the way hast found,  
Come through Death's opposing portal,  
To the Victor's palm immortal,  
With Thy glory crowned.

March 30, 1910.  
From the Baltimore Sun

## THE MESSAGE

Let every South American beware, for lo! the strenuous man, our sovereign lord and master, says:

Unless you quickly mend your ways,  
Upon your bended necks you'll feel  
The impression of my armed heel,  
A thing that every Filipino  
Has learned as thoroughly as we know.

J. B. T.

On President Roosevelt's message to Congress, December, 1904.  
From the *Baltimore Sun*

SUBWAY THEOLOGY

Bishop Potter, finding hotter  
 Passions than there used to be,  
 To the Gospel bids defiance,  
 And appeals to modern science  
 For the remedy.

Saint and devil on a level  
 Walked of late where all men saw;  
 But the wise, by his example,  
 Travel now a subway ample.  
 Paved with fragments of the law.

Here this up-to-date instructor  
 Gives each clerical conductor  
 Transfers for the nuptial route,  
 So that they who feel the folly  
 Of the matrimonial trolley  
 May, at will, get out.

From the *Baltimore Sun*

VOX DEI

"Some said it thundered."

The Father speaking to the Son,  
 In all the multitude was none  
 That caught the meaning true.  
 And yet "This word from Heaven," said He,  
 "Was spoken not because of me—  
 But came because of you."

Thus through the Son of Man alone  
 The mysteries of God are known;  
 Thus to the chosen few  
 With eye and ear attentive found  
 He speaks in every sight and sound,  
 The old becoming new.      From my scrap book.



## DAISIES

Peacemakers ye, the daisies, from the soil  
Upbreathing wordless messages of love,  
Soothing of earth-born brethren the toil  
And lifting e'en the lowliest above.  
*The Making of an American*, Jacob A. Riis, p. 290.

## THE ASTRONOMER

The little dome that holds the brain  
Whereby he measures from afar,  
The influence of steadfast star  
Or moving moon and sun—  
Both vaster mysteries contain  
Than those he looks upon;  
Nay, such the marvel that perchance  
The spheres in mute amazement scan,  
The while they meet his upward glance,  
The deeper mind of man.

## ST. CHRISTOPHER

It was a very little Boy  
That on the river side  
Stood calling, "Ferryman, ahoy!  
Come, take me o'er the tide!"

The Ferryman came wading on,  
And seeing but a child,  
"Get up upon my shoulder, Son,"  
He said, and, stooping, smiled.

But when into the stream again  
The giant boldly strode,  
His every muscle was astrain  
Beneath the growing load;

Till finally, with failing strength,  
He reached the other bank,  
And putting down the Boy, at length  
Upon the margin sank.

"Who art thou," wondering, he cried,

"That hast so burdened me?"

"The Son of God," the Boy replied,

"Who bore the Cross for thee.

"Henceforth thy task pursuing here

For love of souls forlorn

Thou'lt bear the name of Christopher,

As thou the Christ hast borne;

"And little sufferers that see

How great is thy reward

Shall cry, 'like Christopher are we

Thy Ferrymen, O Lord.' " John B. Tabb.

# TO SIDNEY LANIER

The same blue-bending dome encanopies

Thine ashes and the spark that kindles mine;

Upon the selfsame bosom we recline,

When with the wind, the wave, land-lessening, dies

And, 'twixt our souls the star-wrought mysteries—

Of Hope the sacred oracles divine—

Steadfast above the vault of darkness shine,

To point the path benighted to the skies.

For there, of dreams unsepulchred, and free

"To face the vast sweet Visage, unafraid,"

That erst thy spirit revered to see

In Nature's lowliest lineaments portrayed,

Thou keepest watchful memory of me,

A lingering phantom of the mortal shade.

From the *Forty-sixth Birthday Memorial of Sidney Lanier.*

Johns Hopkins University, 1888, p. 11.



APPENDIX II.

UNPUBLISHED POEMS

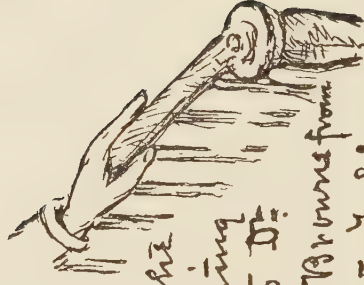
OF

THE BROWNE-TABB ALBUM

## The Composite



A Brown-Jabby.



This with the  
Eastern greeting  
to Love to Dr.  
Wm. Hand Brown from  
Mr. Benjamin Jabby, as  
Posterity shall see them together  
"From Dixie,"

## THE BROWNE-TABB ALBUM

### THE MINIATURE

I know not whence; but on the morning air  
A ghastly whisper pales my waking cheek;  
A shudder in its warning seems to speak,  
    "Beware!"

I woke: the wind at intervals,  
    A mournful vigil kept,  
As o'er a sepulchre, around  
    The chamber where I slept.  
The casement rattled in the blast,  
    The breathing curtains stirred;  
Anon, throughout their shroudy length,  
    A stifled sigh was heard—  
A brooding dread, low whispering  
    In mystic monotone—  
"It was a deed of darkness,  
And in the darkness done."

Again at noon, but thinner, faintlier, there  
As spent with vigil, heaves a stifled sigh  
(I turn to see; but nothing meets the eye)  
    "Beware!"

The pallor of a wasted lamp,  
    A fitful glimmer flung  
Athwart a miniature above  
    The sculptured mantel hung,  
Where gleams of melancholy light,  
    With conscious shadows wrought  
Upon the lineaments portrayed



A malady of thought—  
A dim-remembered agony,  
Interpreting the tone—  
"It was a deed of darkness,  
And in the darkness done!"

At twilight grim, in nature's dumb despair,  
As swoops the prowling darkness of the day,  
Throbs, in a sudden torment of dismay,  
"Beware!"

Aghast, I listened, motionless,  
When lo! a chilling sound—  
The vague pulsation of a heart  
Beneath a mortal wound—  
And from the picture quivering,  
As smitten wan with pain  
Dark, stormy drops fell suddenly  
As a reluctant rain:  
And still the moaning monody  
Rhymed on in undertone—  
"It was a deed of darkness  
And in the darkness done."

At midnight, like an incantation drear,  
The hollow tide in broken thunder-tone  
Sobs, with the beating of my heart, a groan,  
"Beware!"

The spectral eyes drooped languidly,  
The hand convulsive clung,  
The bell of midnight clashed the hour  
With stern prophetic tongue;  
Then, all was blank—oblivious  
In icy calm I lay—  
The morning whitened to behold  
My raven tresses gray;  
And beats forever on my brain  
The throbbing monotone—  
"It was a deed of darkness  
And in the darkness done."

Thus, as a strain bewildered, everywhere,  
The trooping echoes of a formless fear,  
Like startled phantoms, flock upon my ear,  
"Beware!"

## RUIN

It stands like Night,  
The sepulchre of a departed light,  
Whose glory gone,  
Each hoary vestige chronicles  
Of crumbling stone.

The portal now,  
A broken arch majestic, as a brow  
O'er Evening's eye,  
Catches an azure glimpse beyond  
Of fading sky.

On either hand,  
Grim sentinels, the lofty turrets stand,  
With many a scar  
Of Time and tameless Elements  
That wage his war.

The windows tall  
Stare blindly from the ivy-shagged wall  
Of massive power,  
Stern as the eyeless Nazarite  
In Gaza's tower.

O'er shattered frieze,  
O'er buried plinth and capital, the breeze  
That wanders by,  
Woos the rank weed, low answering  
Its plaintive sigh.

Time was, when one,  
Mild as a maiden star to look upon,  
Of pensive mood,  
Here wrought a destiny obscure  
In solitude.

Vague phantoms wove,  
About her being, sympathies that move  
To subtle thought—  
Seraphic reveries that lure  
The soul distraught,

Unto her mind  
The melting moonlight and the moving wind,  
The molten gleam  
Of starry beacons jewelling  
The limpid stream;

The sheen and shade  
Of waking dawn and drowsy twilight made—  
Each multiform  
Design of earth and ocean,  
Calm and storm—

Spake mysteries,  
Revealing all the harmony that lies  
In things we see:  
Of life and death, the tides of joy  
And misery.

So grew her soul,  
Enamored of the spirits that control  
The universe,  
That powers beyond the visible  
Communed with hers,

And each became  
The warder of a consecrated flame;  
As angels high  
O'ershadowing the crystal shrine  
Of Chastity.

But light, alas!  
As to the stainless dewdrops in the grass,  
A fatal gleam  
Smote of its own satiety  
The splendid dream;

And swift as fire,  
Doom-driven to the wanton wind's desire  
A hurricane  
Of howling desolation leaped  
The cloistered brain,

Wild as the woe  
That rends the womb of Nature in the throes  
Of mountain-birth,  
Shuddered the dome celestial  
And startled Earth,

With Echoes torn  
From raping wrath and agonies of scorn—  
A demon cry—  
Lost in this dark contending cloud  
Of Destiny.

The curse was past;  
A sullen vapor silently o'ercast  
The naked Night,  
Till Ruin, hideous with Morn,  
Appalled the sight.

#### THE GHOST CHAMBER

Into the lonely room,  
Spawning an icy gloom,  
Lost in a wandering swoon  
Gloats the wide-horned moon.

Silent the shadows gray  
Shrink from her touch away,  
Loathing her leprous light  
Spotting the robe of Night,  
Moulting a hoary gloom  
Over a haunted room.

Cometh no whisper there:  
Spasms of dank despair  
Curdle the echoes round,

Stifling the birth of sound  
In the grim charnel-womb  
Of the deserted room.

Stark are the staring walls,  
Like unto lidless balls—  
Domes of departed sleep—  
Doomed evermore to keep  
Watch o'er the prisoned gloom  
Of the forsaken room.

### THE BRIDE ELECT

When God created man,  
Of destiny so dim,  
And deigned His work to scan,  
Behold, He pitied him;  
Nay, more, for love of him began  
A greater mystery to plan.

Within the sleeper's brain,  
His waking hours to bless,  
Was born—alas! in vain—  
A dream of loveliness  
That ne'er Omniscience had known  
In light of shadeless heaven alone.

This vision of the night  
The Image-Maker caught  
And for his soul's delight,  
A revelation wrought  
Out of the dreamer's open side—  
Flesh of his flesh—a virgin bride.

### CHOPIN

Soul, that in music, as a flower in light,  
Didst gem, and bloom, and vanish, with a breath  
That mist-like o'er the sullen tide of death  
Keeps fragrant still the memory of thy flight;

Dost thou, immortal, on the topmost height  
Of harmony, forget the world beneath,  
And all its chords tumultuous? Wandereth  
No echo upwards through the sundering night?  
Aye; notes of thine own making, now forlorn,  
Like fledglings fluttered from the nest of love,  
Tell of thy care; while with harmonious wing  
They fan the depths of silence, listening  
To hear anon thy mandate from above,  
Hence to their home, thy bosom, to return.

## DISTANCE

Fair sorceress, upon thy calm domain  
We gaze in ceaseless wonder, compassed round  
By slow-expanding visions interwound  
With phantasies of pleasure, hope, and pain.  
In thee life's wearied echoes find again  
A silent fold: in thee each herald sound,  
As in an Ocean's slumberous depth profound,  
Awaits the future and her shadowy train.  
All hearts the mild enchantment of thy sway  
Subdues to subtlest sympathies benign—  
To thee the golden Present, day by day,  
For some far-glittering idol we resign,  
And, like to exiles, homeward journeying, say:  
"Our sighs, our dreams, our longings, all are thine."

## THE INDIAN

Still westward with the lessening light ye go,  
Dejected people, and the forests tall,  
Bewidowed of their dusky children, fall  
Behind you with an echoing wail of woe.  
Year after year the warrior winds lay low  
The leafy tribes, and with prophetic call  
Denounce the silent massacre of all  
Before the pale usurper's conquering bow.  
Heed ye the signs? or look your longing eyes



Beyond the winter, where the selfsame voice,  
 Warm with the breath of unawakened flowers,  
 Comes softly singing to the world, "Rejoice!  
 The snow is gone: and with the April showers  
 Each buried seed is hastening to arise!"

### PREMONITION

As when at Mary's voice Elizabeth  
 Felt in her womb the restlessness of feet  
 That would outrun delaying birth, and greet  
 Alike unseen, the Conqueror of Death:  
 So, at the hour of midnight, wakes a breath  
 That in the womb of darkness, moves to meet  
 The soul of Morning, and a silence sweet  
 As incense tells of one that worshipeth.  
 Yea; life forever in expectancy  
 Stands tip-toe on the utmost brink of time,  
 Hushing the past, and listening to hear  
 (As poets the inevitable rhyme)  
 A dream's fulfilment in the echoes clear  
 That sing the present in futurity.

### THE SCORE

This is the chart that tells of one who went,  
 Like John, into the wilderness alone—  
 Into a land of Silence, all unknown  
 Till thither by the Muses he was sent.  
 And we upon his wanderings intent  
 Must mark his perilous footsteps, tone by tone,  
 Or else be lost in mazes overgrown  
 With Discord, in a place of banishment.  
 Alone he went; but from his solitude  
 Returning, lo, there followed him a train  
 Of Echoes in an innumerable brood—  
 By Fancy from their sylvan sleep beguiled,  
 But ne'er from wedded Harmonies atwain,  
 Henceforth to slumber in their native wild.

## SWINBURNE

How far soe'er thou wanderest from His law,  
The gift of God we reverence in thee,  
Painting thy thought in gorgeous pageantry,  
To thrill the soul with ecstasy and awe—  
Now with voluptuous syllables to draw  
Remorseful tears; now, like the wintry sea,  
All tempest-tongued, in midnight majesty,  
Dread as the void primeval darkness saw.  
For, since Titanic Milton smote the sky,  
And echoes in the depths responsive found  
Of chaos and the howling gates of hell,  
No messenger of song hath soared so high,  
Nor strewn with ranker luxury the ground,  
Than thou, that singest of the worst so well.

## ADEST

"Heaven is not far," the Violet saith,  
"The fragrance of my censer-breath,  
That lures to Love,  
Upon the altar whence it came  
Commingles with the sacred flame  
That burns above."

## MY BIRTH-CHAMBER

When first I wakened from the night,  
Within that lonely room,  
Methought in exile lived the Light  
That left me in the gloom—  
Its destiny henceforth to be  
With memories apart from me.

## "BREAK, BREAK, BREAK"

Break, silent Dawn, and flood with light  
The fathomless abyss of night;  
Break, thunderous Ocean, till the bound  
Of utmost silence swim with sound;  
Break, troubled heart! No more for thee  
Shall light, or sound, or motion be.

## A LEPER'S GRAVE

Here, where untainted flesh  
Hath dread  
Corruption's bride to be,  
Her life-long victim finds  
A bed  
From her embraces free.

## LEGEND

The Brook goes babbling to the Sea  
In language of the Land,  
Of hill, and dale, and leafy tree,  
Of song-bird, fragrant flower, and bee,  
Beyond the sloping strand.  
Alas! 'Tis all a mystery!  
She doth not understand.

## LIGHTS IN DARKNESS

The Moon, like Mary, bore to be  
The partner of His agony.  
The Sun, in pity for the race,  
Like God, the Father, hid his face,  
That, haled as witness, he might say,  
"I saw not, for I turned away."

## THE QUEST

O Time, where hast thou laid  
My *Self* of yesterday?  
Where at his tomb I prayed  
I come again to pray—  
'Tis empty! Who hath hither strayed  
And taken him away?

## THE RIDDLE

*Out of the Eater, meat:*  
Thou dost the streams devour.  
*Out of the strong, the sweet;*  
The brine begets the shower.  
'Tis thus, O Samson Sea,  
I solve thy mystery.

## SONG

Nay, thou hast not my heart  
Or I such cruel smart  
No more could feel;  
Nor, with my heart couldst thou  
Still heartless prove as now  
Its wound to heal.

## SURVIVAL

"Each plays his part and goes his way,"  
Our hearts at seeming distance say;  
But twixt the blossom and the fruit—  
The topmost twig and lowest root,  
Till seed again to seed shall fall—  
There lies no languid interval;  
And soul is life-allied to soul  
As parts unto the perfect whole.

## VALE

God speed thee, setting sun!  
 Thy beams for me have spun  
     Of light today  
 A memory that one  
 Alone could bring, and none  
     Can take away.

## WHENCE AND WHERE?

Do the blossoms come and go  
 As the waters ebb and flow?  
 Or, as stars, the livelong year,  
 Are they ever blooming here  
 In a garden of delight,  
 Clear or clouded to the sight  
 As the Seasons o'er the land  
 Lift or lower a wizard wand?

## THE WHISTLER

'Tis spring; but laid  
     In ambuscade  
 The Snow malignant lingers,  
     And on the hill  
     The March wind still  
 At times must blow his fingers.

## THE DOVE

The lone horizon listening seems to thee  
     As to a soul beloved—  
 Life's center, by the zone of destiny  
     Forever far removed.

## THE DEATHLESS WIND

Thou canst not die; for who can slay  
A spirit like to thee?  
Yet do we envy not thy stay  
When all things else that be  
Thy boon companions pass away,  
And perish utterly.

And is it, restless Wanderer,  
The secret of the sigh  
That in thy gentlest moods we hear  
Or of the wailing cry  
When tempests fill thee with fear—  
To know thou canst not die?

## IN EXCELSIS

To highest heaven the Lark alone  
Of earthly messengers is known;  
To Silence all things else above,  
He chants the litany of Love.

## OLD AND NEW

Ever old and ever new,  
Else it never could be true.  
Failing leaf and falling snow,  
Budding germ and blossom glow,  
Tell us of a dream come true—  
Ever old and ever new.

## "SWEET TO THE SWEET"

What say the flowers above Ophelia's tomb?  
"We bloom to fade; she faded but to bloom."



## THE BIOLOGIST

I seek the poles of Being; but the breath of icy death  
That bans the sailor from the utmost sea  
Still baffles me.

What if the flash of naked knowledge blind  
The dazzled mind?  
What if beyond its depths unfathomed be  
Of mystery—

Of limitless intelligence, that man,  
Alert to scan,  
Must headlong to annihilation fall,  
Or grasp the All?

What then? Of what alone I'd compassed none  
But mine—the One,  
Omniscient, Omnipotent—could be  
The Sovereignty.

## A PRESENCE

As on the lids of slumber lies a dream,  
Or fragrance on the petals of a flower,  
Or on the bosom of the deep, a beam  
At twilight's nuptial hour,  
So with me, in the soul of Silence, thou  
Abidest now.

## A SONG OF EXPECTANCY

Time will tell us: only wait;  
He alone the secret knows,  
He alone the Delphic gate  
Shuts, or open throws.

Time will tell us: kind is he;  
Sorrow wins not by delay,  
But the wine of joy to be  
Ripens day by day.

## LIGHT IN DARKNESS

The Day—of sorrow pitiless—  
Proclaims, "He is not here."  
But never hath the tenderness  
Of Night denied thee near.

Nay, in the twilight shadowy  
Returning from afar,  
She wakes again for Memory  
The Dawn-extinguished star.

## LOSS AND GAIN

"Behold Thy Mother! 'Tis the loss  
Of heaven, the load of shame,  
The sweat of agony, the cross,  
That ratifies thy claim."

He heard; and for the tender name,  
A Babe to Bethlehem He came.

## MOUNTAINEERS

They climb with eager feet,  
One east, one west,  
As if in haste to meet  
Upon the crest;  
Yet each alone—  
A fate unknown—  
Nor deeming one, if either fails, how far  
Or near they are.

## SNOWDROP

The white lips just above the ground  
Where sleeps my latest-born, I found;  
And, kneeling for the sleeper's sake,  
I kissed the blossom just awake.

## "PEACE!"

A little warbler dead—  
 A muted melody  
 Of dimpled-notes that spread  
 Like circles on the sea:

One whispered word to chill  
 The panting bosom warm,  
 And suddenly to still  
 The passion of the storm.

## ROOFLESS

O Winter-Wind, behold,  
 You call no more in vain,  
 As in the nights of old,  
 When door and window-pane  
 Were barred against you and the cold  
 That followed in your train.

Come in; for I have known  
 You now this many a year;  
 And dying thus alone,  
 'Tis sweet again to hear  
 A voice familiar as my own,  
 The latest in my ear.

## THE OMEN

He crept behind me, and his gentle hand  
 Laid on my lids, lest I too soon should see  
 The face in all the world most dear to me.  
 The meaning then I did not understand.

But now that he is vanished, I have guessed  
 The import of the far foreshadowed sign:  
 For closer than was his the hand Divine  
 Is tenderly upon mine eyelids pressed.

## NIAGARA

On Regan and on Goneril—  
The rugged rocks below—  
He pours as from the mouth of hell  
The torrent of his woe;  
While o'er him, with protecting hands,  
Cordelia—the rainbow—stands.

## RUTS

I count the wrinkles in the road,  
As men are wont to trace  
The ravages of Time and Thought  
Upon a human face.

Such are the vestiges of feet  
That day by day appear,  
And such of sightless memories  
Whose track alone is here.

## TRANSPLANTED

No seed of Joy within us lies.  
So, if our souls the blossom bear,  
It is a flower of Paradise  
That Love has planted there.

And in its vanished light we trace  
A halo of the sunset skies;  
A fragrance in the holy place  
Survives the sacrifice.

## SHAKESPEARE'S KEY

"Unlocked his heart?" Not he!  
Of *thine* the cunning key  
He keeps, to open still  
And enter at his will.

## BETWEEN

Beneath the dome of Yesterday,  
 My buried Self I see—  
 Of Time a portion passed away,  
 And nevermore to be.

Beneath lo, morrow's dome, a breath  
 Of unawakened Morn,  
 I wait nativity—of Death  
 Or Life a babe unborn.

## EYES

Sweet spirits born together  
 To dwell in orbs apart,  
 And feel the changeful weather  
 That clouds or clears the Heart;

Ye see not one the other,  
 But in the smile or tear  
 That makes of both a mother  
 Each knows a sister near.

## MY SONG

I go; but thou, my Song,  
 Shall live as long  
 As Tongue and fervid Heart  
 Life's passion-power impart.

Henceforth, of Love and thee  
 Eternal Harmony  
 Makes one; nor Time nor Death  
 The soul-chord sundereth.

## MY TRUANT

I bade him sleep, and he obeyed;  
 But when I called him back to pain  
 Within the slumber-world he stayed  
 And would not wake again.

## LOVE'S USURY

I love you; and because you do not love,  
I am the poorer and the richer, too;  
The poorer, for you've taken all whereof  
I gave; the richer, for enriching *you*.

## "WRIT IN WATER"

E'en so; and where the fountain flows along,  
Unsatisfied, the burning lips of Love  
(Each passion growing with the taste thereof)  
Drink, as of wine, the torrent of thy song.

## SEPARATION

"Till Death do us part,  
Ever one to remain,"  
To the new-plighted heart  
Was a whisper of pain:

For the soul cannot die;  
And the life that is fled  
Waits, bewidowed as I,  
Until Death us do wed.

## TO SLEEP

O tender Mother, blind and dumb,  
Who dost to all thy children come  
When others flee—  
Like Mary at the cross to stay  
E'en when our Father turns away,  
Come now to me!

## WILTED

Little blossom, thou and I  
Both were born alike to die.  
Less of time allowed to thee;  
Haply, more Eternity.



## VAPORS

In silence from the earth we rise  
To learn the language of the skies;  
Then, brimmed with music, melt again,  
In soft soliloquies of rain,  
To wake the seed-land slumbering deep,  
And soothe the laborer to sleep.

## ASPIRATION

Make me, O Cloud, thy comrade! Let me be  
As thou, the silent Sister of the Wind;  
The nursling of the Sun and of the Sea;  
A shade of Earth in light celestial shrined.

## IN BANISHMENT

Though from the waking world withdrawn,  
Night's boundary to keep,  
Thou floodest with a softer dawn  
The hemisphere of Sleep.

## BEETHOVEN (DEAF)

So, he who Samson-like of sound  
Hath wrought our captive chains  
In everlasting silence bound  
A prisoner remains.

## CONTACT

The universe is but the lordly hem  
Of God's out-flowing garment; and to them  
That touch in faith, its mysteries reveal  
A sacrament each mortal wound to heal.

## THE FIRST DREAMER

He woke to clasp the vision of his dream,  
A self from self divided, that apart—  
Twin banks begotten of the selfsame stream—  
Each might in God behold the other's heart.

## ENSHRINED

Each soul a sunbeam in a shroud  
Of folding mist appears;  
Now touched with rainbows, like a cloud,  
And now dissolved in tears.

## EXPECTANCY

An eagle on the summit—Hope and Fear,  
Alternate pinions, moving restlessly.  
O Distance, doth the better part appear  
Doubt, or fulfilment of the thing to be?

## LEAR'S FOOL

"I'll go to bed at noon."  
Ah, Fool, 'twas wisely said;  
For Sorrow ne'er too soon  
The requiem-call to bed.

## FULFILMENT

Since that the unfulfilled desire of Shame  
Meets the full-measured blame,  
So must the prayer that missed the deed of Love  
Find recompense above.

## PRESENTIMENT

In boreal calm thy spirit feels  
A far-off thunder roll;  
And through each tropic passion steals  
A current from the pole.

“THROUGH THE SHARP HAWTHORNE  
BLOWS THE COLD WIND”

O Wind, like raging Lear forlorn,  
Against the sharp opposing thorne  
Thou barest thy bosom, as in scorn  
Of hearts with lesser anguish torn.

SCIENCE

Like Martha, she, with question manifold,  
Pursues her daily round;  
Nor sees that Faith her sister, as of old,  
The better part has found.

SLEEP

A house of hands not builded like the sky,  
O'erbending, but unsullied by the sod—  
Where Guilt alike oblivious may lie  
With Innocence, beside the lamb of God.

APRIL

“How is it you are laughing, dear,  
With both your eyes a-twinkle?  
Alas, 'tis all too soon, I fear  
To let my little buds appear.  
But now each restless prisoner  
Attempts my foot to tickle,  
And once to laugh if I begin,  
They know I cannot keep them in.”

“CROSSING THE BAR”

No need, O weary traveller,  
To seek the ocean far;  
For here, whene'er the coast is clear,  
The schooners cross the bar.

## ABDUL'S CHANCES

With 'leven, it were not surprising  
Should Abdul get another rising,  
Or with the bakers over there  
Or brewers, he should get a bier.

## IN THE CONFESSIONAL

"Well, Pat, have you no more to say?"  
"That's all, yer Riverence, today;  
But with the help of Hiven, be sure  
Anither toime I'll tell ye more."

## EUREKA

I love, as when a boy,  
That note exultant of domestic joy,  
When, triumph won,  
The Hen, like Archimedes, proclaims, "  
"I've found it! If ye doubt me,  
Dons and Dames,  
Come *see* what I have done."

## AN INCONGRUITY

As they have safely reached the Church,  
It seems a thing to smile at  
That, to direct them in the search,  
We had a Pounce-as Pilot.

## INCOME FROM GO-OUT

A fellow with a gouty foot  
Was on a restless donkey put,  
At which he swore in vain;  
But soon he hired the donkey out,  
And what he got relieved the gout,  
For it ass-waged his pain.

## FATHER TABB

## THE TIDES AT PANAMA

“An effort gigantic,”  
Exclaims the Atlantic,  
“Is making, to wed us by force.”  
“Indeed, ’tis terrific,”  
Replies the Pacific,  
“But cannot we get a divorce?  
For Teddy  
Is ready  
To sanction an ocean  
Whose aim  
Is a claim  
To prevent Trust-promotion.”

## MY TROUBLE

Alas! what shall I do?  
I have lost my nearest friend;  
He tender was and true,  
And faithful to the end.  
  
In sunshine and in shade  
He closer stuck to me  
Than handle to a blade,  
Or wax unto a bee.  
  
But he'll not come again,  
Nor know what I'm about,  
For when he gave me pain,  
The doctor cut him out.  
  
And sad it is to me  
That I can never tell  
If my appendix be  
In heaven or in hell.

## A FINE PENALTY

He offered but a poor defence,  
That advocate of mine;  
And yet, despite the evidence,  
The penalty was fine.



Old - Made .

The greater mystery it is  
The more we think upon it,  
That 'tis the oldest style of Miss  
That wants the youngest bonnet.

Nor is it levity of mind  
That leads to such selection,  
For 'tis the fruit we often find,  
Of much *mature reflection*.

#### MAID OF ALGERIA

There was an old maid of Algeria  
Whose lungs were but cells of bacteria;  
So she cut them both out,  
Exclaiming, no doubt,  
"It will be said that I died of Hysteria."



## THE FRISKING LAMB

Tho' gay its life, in fact and fable,  
In death its fate is lamb-on-table.

## A BRIEF PEDIGREE

My mother was a Mare;  
My father was, alas,  
(It pains me to declare),  
A veritable Ass.  
With rare exceptions, as a rule,  
There're no descendants from a Mule—  
The simple reason why, no doubt,  
Some other families die out.

## A PIECE OF PRESUMPTION

Asked a possum of a canner  
In his most seductive manner,  
"Can you take me in, old man?"  
He replied, "Possum, I can."

## SEA-SICKNESS

Her doctor advising, a victim of grippe  
Set out on a journey to Rome;  
But ere she reached Naples, she threw up her trip  
And returned by the next steamer home.

## D——D

D. D. O. sioux, appeal to you?  
And D. D. favor win?  
In D. D. D. appeal; and we  
Politely took him in.

## SONG OF THE SIOUX

O'Gorman comes! Your knives unsheathe,  
To slice so sweet an appetiser!  
Kindle the fire! and whet your teeth!  
And be each a man a Gormandiser!

"Dr. O'Gorman, of the Catholic University, has just been appointed Bishop of Sioux Falls; hence this letter."

## DEFIANCE

Tho' the modern woman *pants*  
To disguise her gender,  
Yet no fear my spirits haunts  
Lest I should offend her.

Vain it were indeed to hiss—  
Vainer still to chide her;  
The *hit* offends her, and the *Miss*  
Makes the breeches wider.

## JOB-PRINTING

"Job-Printing!" I suspected so,  
For none was ever half so slow  
But Job, who by the gift he had  
Of patience drove the devil mad.



APPENDIX III.  
UNPUBLISHED POEMS  
OF  
THE CONNOR MANUSCRIPT



## THE CONNOR MANUSCRIPT

### THE TREE

Thou art the blessed Tree  
Whose fruit proclaimeth thee,  
O Mother mine!  
For never laden bough  
Such burden bore as thou,  
O Love Divine.

### MY STEWARDSHIP

Lord, what Thou lendest me is Thine;  
Nor less beneath Thy care,  
For that Thy bounty makes it mine  
Love's heritage to share.

### DREAMS

Our dreams but tell the thoughts of those  
Around us; e'en as water shows  
The images upon it thrown  
In lights and shadows not its own.

### THE ACORN

Of myriads, but one hath found  
The sesame that opes the ground,  
And shows the hidden treasury  
Of all the wealth that makes a tree.



## (THE MESSAGE OF THE GRASS)

Give me Thyself to see  
In what is least to me:  
That as I pass  
Each blade of grass  
That points above  
May cry aloud, "O Love,  
The light is Thine alone,  
The shadows all my own."

## THE TREE

To me the trembling Adam fled in shame  
From God's avenging eye;  
To me the Christ, a sinless victim, came  
For Adam's guilt to die.

## TO THE NEW MOON

Thou lookest on the lonely place,  
To find no more the sleeping face,  
Nor kiss again the crescent brow—  
Thy fairer counterpart till now.

## SEPARATION

To leave what most we love, in loneliness,  
To know our absence in some heart will make  
E'en love itself a sorrow for our sake—  
Ah, whose the weight of heavier distress?

## LINES

As the petals fall away  
Briefer grows the autumn day;  
When the blossoms come again,  
Longer will the light remain.

## EGLANTINE

Sweet Eglantine, this breath of thine—  
Mute eloquence of what was mine—  
Awakes a memory divine,  
    A vanished gleam

Of Joy, that in my heart today,  
Amid the folding shadows gray,  
Doth lie, as erst in light it lay,  
    A fragrant dream.

## SECOND CHILDHOOD

Since such alone can of Thy kingdom be,  
A little child Thou comest unto me;  
Then whatsoe'er of second birth the pain,  
Make me, O Lord, a little child again.

## MATURITY

Talk not of childhood's thoughtless joy!  
I would not be again a boy  
    For all that boyhood brings;  
The callow fledgling in the nest  
Is not of birds supremely blest  
    As he that soars and sings.

## DOMUS AUREA

Behold the living "House of Prayer"  
Above the waves uplifted; where  
The Bird of heaven, no more to roam,  
Henceforth forever hath His home  
Within the maiden heart that heard  
And mothered God's Eternal Word.

## AN ALIEN

I saw in heaven, the hovering wings beneath,  
A Shade unbanished by the Light above:  
What is thy name? "The messenger of Love—  
The friend of all who passed yon portal—Death."

## WHEAT

Christlike falls the golden grain;  
Christlike doth it rise again;  
Christlike, as our daily food,  
One with us in flesh and blood.

## THE SWORD OF SIMEON

Blest be the sword that cleft her heart in twain!  
Else had the "pondered word" forever lain  
Within the temple of her soul concealed,  
Whose wound the thoughts of many a heart revealed:  
Yea, to the source from whence the waters flow  
The spear that smites the fountain-Rock must go.

## BONDAGE

Cries Death, "O Man, thy liberty,  
What boots it! Low thou bowest the knee  
Subservient to masters three—  
Thy conquerors—Pain, Age, and Me.

## COBWEB

A fairy canopy it seems,  
By magic fingers spread;  
Whence, suddenly, our vanished dreams  
At flush of morning, fled.

## "OMNIPOTENCE IN BONDS"

Thou that couldst ne'er be bound  
Canst nevermore be free:  
So close about Thee wound  
Is our humanity.  
As well desert Thy Father's throne  
As Mary's Motherhood disown.

## THE ORIGIN OF TEARS

When Eve, the twilight heavens to view,  
Her eyes, like twin-born violets blue,  
Upraised—the angel of the Dew  
Bestowed his blessing, ere he knew.

## TO A SON IN CHRIST

Ye Angels, lo, an angel unto you,  
His Guardians, I commend.  
Behold him, white in baptismal dew,  
Nor blush to call him friend.

## LEAR'S FOOL

A bird that twitters where storm-treachery  
Hath fanged the oak, whose nest-supporting limb,  
Death-smitten, droops compassionate for him  
As for its own unsceptered majesty.

## MORNING-GLORIES

We blossom in the border land  
When pilgrim shadows strew  
The largess of a liberal hand,  
In glittering gems of dew.

Too timorous our glances are  
The noonday watch to keep:  
The sisters of the twilight star,  
With him we wake or sleep.

## ALFRED TENNYSON

The voice that late with music thrilled  
 The world, in silence now is stilled.  
 Or is our loss the larger gain  
 Of worlds new-wakened to his strain?

## TENNYSON

'Twas fit that with the falling year  
 He too should fall;  
 That he, when Nature heeds, should hear  
 The homeward call;  
 That leaves autumnal o'er his bier  
 Bespread the pall,  
 For in their funeral train appear  
 The thoughts of all.

## TOO LATE

Sighed a poet when his fame  
 After fifty winters came  
 And the Editors were asking for his rhyme:  
 Alas, I've lost my chance  
 As a hero of romance,  
 For I've lived just thirty years beyond the time!

## SIGNIFICANCE

Nothing is vain: a stifled sigh  
 Life's passion pang betrays:  
 One glance of Love's prophetic eye  
 Eternity surveys.

## SOLICITUDE

No mother minds so tenderly  
Her babe, to mirror back its smiles,  
As moves the never-resting sea  
About a slumbering isle.

## BEYOND

How many larks are soaring—  
How many voices loud—  
Their songs of praise outpouring  
Where distance, like a cloud,  
Is stretched above us for a screen  
Lest aught of heaven be heard or seen!

Ah, should one note prevailing,  
A momentary glow,  
Love's meteor light out-trailing,  
Flash over us below,  
Thenceforth the music of a sigh  
Were earth's divinest melody.

## TOMORROW

Upon thy face alone no trace  
Of Time, no touch of sorrow;  
No shade of night upon the light  
That floods thy soul, sweet Morrow.

## GARNERED

The tints that fly the autumn leaves,  
The leaves that fly the tree,  
Anon the Wizard Winter weaves  
In blossoms yet to be.



## EXTORTION

Amid the stores of Opulence,  
If *Courtesy* is scant,  
'Twere cruel to exact from thence  
What would increase the want.

## LONELINESS

Dead in the desert! with the great white moon  
Above him and around him wastes of sand,  
The seed of endless centuries, so soon  
Escaped the struggles of a nerveless hand.

## TO A DEAD THRUSH

Though Silence shuts the gate of Song,  
I keep thereof the key,  
And hear thee warbling still among  
The groves of Memory.

## TO A BROTHER-BONE

Apart, of death and silence we,  
The fittest emblems found,  
Together, mad with minstrelsy,  
Leap into life and sound.

## THE PHANTOM WRAITH

When roars the wind and beats the rain,  
A face before my window-pane—  
A phantom of the storm—I see,  
My own benighted effigy.

So, when the spirit shuddereth  
Before the mystery of Death  
Perchance the shadow there portrayed  
Is but its own reflected shade.

## ATTAR OF ROSES

The wafture of a thousand flowers is here  
Concentrated from afar,  
As gleams of many a steadfast sister sphere  
Upon a wandering star.

And every breath in sweet remembrance bears  
The blossom whence it came,  
As radiance, or genial warmth, declares  
The unextinguished flame.

## SELF-SACRIFICE

Lo, all I have is Thine—  
My wealth, my poverty.  
Ne'er canst thou, Lord, resign  
Of Self so much to me:  
For, giving Thou hast more;  
But I, henceforth, am poor.

## THE MORNING STAR

The latest beacon spark  
Upon the western way  
To guide thro' shallowing dark  
The silver sails of Day.

## DESMOS

I am Thy captive; break Thou not my chain;  
Beyond my dungeon all is death to me.  
Here must my soul, Love's prisoner, remain;  
Bondage alone is life and liberty.

## BLIND

Is then the light so near  
That seems so far to me?  
E'en so about us here  
All vanished joys may be.

Time's chrysalis outgrown,  
The garments that they wore—  
Sight, smell, touch, taste, and tone—  
They heed them now no more;

For deep to answering deep  
Calls through eternity,  
E'en as these tears I weep,  
Alas, but cannot see!

## THE WRAITH

The mist commingled with her tears  
The while she watched his form—  
The hazard of her hopes and fears—  
Defy the threatening storm.

And where he vanished from her eyes,  
Behold, his spirit brave,  
Defiant, in the fog's disguise,  
Forsakes the watery grave.

## WHERE ARMIES MET

I heard the distant summons loud  
To battle, from the crested Cloud,  
The vaunting trumpet of the Gale,  
The rattling musketry of Hail,  
The sobbing of the Rain, and lo!  
The silence of the shrouding Snow.

## CHRIST THE MENDICANT

A stranger, to his own  
He came; and one alone,  
Who knew not sin,  
His lowliness believed,  
And in her soul conceived  
To let Him in.

He naked was, and she  
Of her humanity  
A garment wove:  
He hungered, and she gave  
What most His heart did crave—  
A mother's love.

## TRANSMISSION

'Tis one by one we come and go;  
'Tis one by one we stand or fall;  
'Tis one by one the All we know,  
And one by one He comes to all.

## THE GLEANER

Lo, silence, like a roving bee  
Upon her daily round,  
To fill the hive of memory  
Despoils each blossom-sound,  
And winters, as the past devours  
Whate'er the present yields,  
The promise of immortal flowers  
For time's unfallowed fields.

## MY SERVANT

If what unto the least I do,  
I do it unto thee,  
Then in the least, O Lord, I view  
Thy service unto *me*.

## FATHER TABB

## DIVORCE

Time was when Faith and Reason trod  
With wedded hands the ways of God,  
But now, Love's sacrament denied,  
What God hath joined doth Man divide.

## SNOWDROPS

As a blossom of the light  
Drifted downward through the night,  
From the darkness far below  
Came her counterpart of snow.

## SACRIFICE

The dusky mother of the rosy morn  
Dies at its birth, contented to depart;  
As sorrow from the precincts of the heart  
When, flushed with tears, the man-child joy is born.

## SUCCESSORS

Says the Shadow to the Sun,  
"When the victory is done  
All the world that thou hast won  
Will be mine!"

Says the Sun, "My banner bright  
May be folded for a night;  
But anon with broader light  
Shall it shine."

## ANGELS OF PAIN

Ah, could they come revisiting the spot,  
Whence by our prayers we drove them utterly,  
Shame were it for their saddened eyes to see  
How their visitations are forgot!

## UNFETTERED

The winds are wailing, and I cannot sleep;  
What would ye, wandering sisters? Free to go  
Where'er ye list, and yet no happier so  
Than in the limits of Life's dungeon-keep?

## MOLOKAI

The heaven's clean space above it and around  
The one expanse whereon no stain can be;  
Soothing all else within an Eden bound  
Of tropic life but snow-clad leprosy.

## RESTORATION

The light may cleave our kindred shades  
And banish us apart,  
But distance in the darkness fades  
And we are heart to heart.

## THE MATERNITY

One through Mother Mary, we  
With Thy warm humanity;  
And through Thee, her only Son,  
With our heavenly Father one;  
Motherless the world above,  
Earth had closer claims of love.

## LIFE-SONG

Breathe it must for ecstasy,  
Or a stifled blossom die:  
Aching silence overgrown  
Brings to birth the living tone  
Sap-like, evermore to be  
One with full-blown memory.



## THE RIVER

How calm the silent sister of the sea!  
No ripple on her ever-moving breast;  
The glass of Time and of Eternity—  
Unending motion in unending rest.

## THE PASSION

O Night, thou never canst forget  
The agony and the bloody sweat  
Whereof the mere remembrance yet  
Again makes all thy garments wet.

## AN ECHO

“Keats! Keats!”  
From yonder bush  
The startled thrush  
This name repeats;  
As if he heard  
My *thought*, and fain  
Would greet again  
His brother-bird.

## APRIL

For many a flower that sleeps  
The zephyrs sigh in vain,  
Till April, Christ-like, weeps  
And Lazarus lives again.

## THE WIZARD

Spring-like Prospero through all the land  
Now waves again his magic wand,  
From Winter's long captivity  
To set the April-blossoms free.

## ON THE HEIGHTS

On Pisgah each must stand,  
And in a fruitful land  
Afar descried,  
Behold with longing eyes  
Some promised Paradise  
Of bliss denied.

And each on Calvary  
Upon his cross must be  
A sacrifice;  
Where, Christ-like, two between—  
For Life or Death unseen—  
The victim dies.

## THE WAY-SIDE TREE

The loiterers in my shade of old  
Themselves are shadows now;  
Their bodies, mingled with the mold,  
Upbreathe to many a bough  
The leaves o'ershadowing today  
Some fellow-pilgrim on the way  
That leads him to the vision blest,  
The Holy Sepulchre of Rest.

## WORSHIPPERS

The gift of utterance is ours,  
Love's service to proclaim;  
But in the fragrance of the flowers  
There breathes a purer flame.  
Abiding in their place of birth,  
They cleave unto the sod,  
In reverence, nearer unto earth;  
In lowliness, to God.

## LIGHT IN DARKNESS

I saw thee once in waking light—  
A darkness now to me,  
Since 'tis alone in dreams of night  
That I may gaze on thee.

## TWO EPITAPHS

"Love lingers here where Life has fled."  
Where, Death, thy victory?  
"Life lingers here where Love is dead."  
Then hail, O Death, to thee!

## VESTIGES

Upon the Isle of Time we trace  
The signs of many a vanished race;  
But on the sea that caps it round,  
No memory of man is found.

## HARVEST

The powers of heaven plant the weed  
That man uproots to set his seed:  
So doth the God Incarnate plan  
Through Man to feed his fellow-man.

## SHADOWS

Like stars that in the waves below  
With heaven's reflected splendor glow,  
The flowers in all their glory bright  
Are shadows of a finer light.

## NUNC ET SEMPER

Am I awake? or do I dream?  
To me forever moving seem  
Alike the margin and the stream.

I breathe; and lo, a whisper saith,  
“ ’Tis Life.” A silence answereth,  
As if in pity, “Nay, ’tis Death.”

Alike the Future and the Past  
Proclaim, “We are but shadows cast  
Before and after, first and last.

Between us thine eternal lot  
Is laid—a consecrated spot—  
Whereon we gaze, but enter not.

Unpiloted—we know not how—  
Unto this new-discovered Now,  
We come, its guardians, as thou.”

## DEFLOWERED

All the light of heaven  
In a single beam  
Unto earth was given,  
As a perfect dream,  
Wherein one bated breath  
Of ecstasy is Death.

All of faith’s believing  
In one smile of love;  
All of life’s receiving  
In a frown thereof:  
For one frail flower the less,  
God’s world a wilderness.

## A MEDITATION

'Tis Nothingness that sunders me,  
O God, from thine Eternity,  
Wherein, a being yet to be,  
I dwelt forever one with Thee,  
Till twixt Thee and thy living Thought  
This veil of Nothingness was wrought—  
A gulf thy Love alone could span—  
The mystery that made me Man.

## FAREWELL!

“Farewell!” The fading day  
Still whispers, “Fare thee well.  
I go the darkened way  
Whence none returns to tell  
Of those that thither stray  
What fate befell.”

## THE WRECK

Was it thy lord the sea  
That wrought this tragedy,  
A spouse to spurn?  
Or didst thou faithless prove  
And to thine ancient love,  
The land, return!  
  
The lesson of thy fate  
(Alas, for thee too late)  
In silence saith,  
“Once wedded to the main  
Unto the shore again  
To turn is Death.”

## DELUSION

Thy presence woke me to the pain  
Of sympathies apart:  
Thy absence bids me dream again  
That we are one in heart.

## THE HOUR

"Why weepest thou, O twilight gray,  
In unavailing sorrow?"  
"Alas, I've lost a yesterday  
And ne'er shall find a morrow.

## UNDER THE TREES

("Exultabunt omnia ligna sylvarum.")

As oft in wandering distress,  
Today in solemn thankfulness,  
Unto your God and mine  
I come with winnowings of prayer,  
O sinless suppliants, to share  
Your mysteries divine.

## TIME'S MEZZOTINT

'Tis in the shadows that we trace  
The light of Love's remembered face:  
'Tis in the register of Pain  
That Life's immortal deeds remain.

## THE LARK'S FIAT

How vast the ocean of the dark!  
How small the compass of the lark  
Whose "Fiat" from the void of night  
Awakes the new-created light.



## MATER DEI

As Faith, a pilgrim, seeks the tomb  
Where once in Death's eclipsing gloom  
Her Hope o'erclouded lay;  
So Love unto the blessed womb  
Where slept her Life's unbudded bloom  
Would lowly reverence pay.

## THE CHRIST-LIKE SPRING

Wherever thou dost come,  
The birds and fountains dumb  
Break forth in song;  
While groping blossoms blind  
Their sight and fragrance find  
To hail the throng,  
Exulting everywhere,  
Of palsied limbs and bare,  
Reclothed and strong.

## AN EASTER LILY

In vain to seal the sepulchre  
The Pilate Death commands;  
For, lo, again his prisoner  
Within the garden stands.

## SLEEP

Another Mary seemest thou to me—  
A rainbow span,  
Twixt life and death a miracle, as she  
Twixt God and Man.

## AFTER BEDTIME

Little heads are sleeping all,  
While within the darkened hall  
Hang their hats upon the wall;

Like the little hives arow,  
Where bee-fancies to and fro  
All day long do come and go.

Some with pleasure, some with pain,  
Through the sunshine and the rain,  
Busy for the brooding brain.

All is quiet now and rest;  
In each slumber-shaded breast  
Dreams have found another nest.

## BLESSED VIRGIN

Why is the B. V. clad in Blue?  
Because when comes no cloud between  
My heart and Heaven above  
Then wears the firmament serene  
The livery of Love.

## A TRYSTING PLACE

As stars amid the darkness seen,  
When flows the deepening dawn between  
To cover them from sight,  
O'erleap the spaces of the dark  
And, spark to quickening sister-spark,  
Commingle in the light;

E'en so, a solitary way  
Do we, beloved, day by day  
In weariness and pain,  
Climb, desolate, from steep to steep,  
Till in the shadowy vale of sleep  
Our spirits blend again.

## A MIRACLE

For each *hen*-turkey slain today  
To celebrate Thanksgiving,  
Full many a gobbler, strange to say,  
Is made among the living.

## RESTITUTION

"Did you restore that mangy sow  
You stole from Pat McCarthy?"  
"Indade I did, and have her now;  
And she is fat and hearty."

## POST MORTEM

"When I am dead," the poet said,  
"The world shall read my verses."  
"Then better pray on earth to stay,"  
Said one, "and curb the curses."

## SUI GENERIS

He: "I'm not of Adam's lineage bred,  
And pedigree will show it."  
She: "Ah, pity 'tis the old man's dead.  
'Twould please him so to know it."

## THE EPITAPH

*Not dead, but sleeping.* So it read.  
Said Pat, when he was shown it,  
"I would, bedad, if I was dead,  
Be man enough to own it."

## ODE TO A PASSION

He slandered me; and I "with eyes of fire,"  
Like Collins' Anger, rose and struck the liar.  
"You do me wrong," he muttered with surprise.  
"Then," said I, "thus do I Apollo-gize."



APPENDIX IV.  
UNPUBLISHED POEMS  
FROM  
THE DONAHOE CLASS-BOOK





## THE DONAHOE CLASS-BOOK

### CHRIST'S LITTLE SISTER

Little Sister of the Poor,  
Asking alms from door to door,  
    Ever on you go;  
Clothed in the garb of meekness,  
Finding strength in others' weakness,  
    Soothing others' woe.

Little Sister of the Poor,  
Rich in patience to endure  
    Stern Redemption's load;  
Cold and rain and parching heat  
Hinder not heroic feet  
    On the Royal Road.

Little Sister of the Poor,  
When your weary day is o'er  
    Rest there may not be;  
For the aged, sick, and needy  
Vigils claim and succor speedy,  
    Turning unto thee.

Little Sister of the Poor,  
Narrow is the way but sure,  
    Heavenward leading on;  
For the Master's word thou knowest,  
"What unto the least thou doest  
    Unto me is done."

J. B. Tabb, Rhetoric Class '74-75.

Pages 144-5.

## THE BELLMAN

He sits alone in the belfry,  
A feeble man and gray,  
And tolls the bell when its full notes tell  
Of the hours that glide away.

In the mist of the early morning,  
In the glare of the garish noon,  
In the midnight deep when the shadows creep  
On the track of the waning moon,

When the snow in the starlight glistens,  
When the flowers from their grave arise,  
When the faint airs swoon in the languid June  
When the dirge of autumn sighs.

Like Time with the scythe uplifted  
He measures each silent spell,  
Sifting the sand with a tremulous hand,  
As he waits for the brooding knell.

Each stroke has a double meaning  
A welcome and farewell—  
In a single breath a birth and death,  
A past and a future dwell.

A groan and a peal of laughter,  
A tear of joy or of pain,  
A frown that breaks or a smile that wakes  
Sunshine in the heart again.

Like a vane in the wind or Fortune  
Has the life of the bellman gone,  
For its changes have been as the shadow and sheen  
That stride over the waving corn.

But his heart like the bell he tolleth  
Beats ever the selfsame tone,  
Saying all I have is the God's who gave;  
Let Him do as He will with His own.

## THE OUTCAST

Dead! Found in the desolate street  
Where the drifting snow had silently piled  
As if in pity, poor wandering child,  
To mantle thee in its sheet.

Pale e'en as thy covering pure  
Nor colder its touch than thy marble breast  
And the heart beneath in a dreamless rest  
That throbs to the tempest no more.

Still fresh in the halo of morn!  
But love-blighted Innocence thrust away  
Prone on the gulf of its bitterness lay  
Aghast, unresisting, forlorn.

Alas! For thee, dissolute man,  
Thy token her tapering finger bears;  
How the glittering mock of the bauble glares,  
Mid beauty so rigid and wan.

Couldst thou gaze on thy victim again  
On the icy calm of her lineaments now,  
This pallid eclipse of the queenly brow  
Would smite thy voluptuous brain—

Yet naught but forgiveness there.  
The dumb lips falter in suppliance meek,  
While a ringlet stirs on the ivory cheek  
As if with the breathing of prayer.

Ah! Who hath her history known?  
The bleak world stifles the penitent's prayer;  
She turns from its withering scorn to die  
Homeless, unfriended, alone.

O thou, in whose sheltering side  
Sweet refuge still for the lost remains  
Cleanse in thy pity her glittering stains,  
Her shame in thy chastity hide.

A VISIT TO THE BLESSED SACRAMENT ON THE  
EVE OF THE EPIPHANY

Now the dusky wing of twilight  
Hovers o'er the weary day,  
And the ever deeping shadows  
Slowly steal across our way.

Here amid the solemn stillness  
And the gathering shades of night  
Sweet it is, O loving Jesu,  
Thee to seek, our fadeless Light!

Yonder lamp before the altar  
Tells us of Thy presence there,  
As the wondrous Star of Bethlehem  
Did Thy dwelling place declare.

And we bow in adoration  
As the Magi knelt of old,  
Offering Thee our humble tributes  
With their incense, myrrh, and gold.

Grant us like those Kings of the Orient,  
Ever onward to proceed,  
Through all dangers, pain, and labor,  
Wheresoe'er Thy Light may lead;

Till our earthly journey ended,  
We at last may rest with them,  
Where no shadow veils Thy glory,  
In the heavenly Bethlehem.

J. B. Tabb, Richmond, Va.

Pages 68-69.

## ADIEU

The leaves upon the summer tree  
Hang side by side,  
But winter's breath will scatter them  
All far and wide.  
E'en thus, together have our lots been cast,  
And so for us the parting comes at last.

But He who clothes the summer tree  
Or makes it bare,  
Let's not the frailest blossom fall  
Without His care.  
So, ever 'neath His guiding hand, may we  
Together or apart, safe, sheltered be.

John B. Tabb, Rhetoric Class '74-75.

Page 129.





APPENDIX V  
NOTES  
AND  
BIBLIOGRAPHY



## NOTES

1. M. S. Pine spells this name incorrectly; so does his own niece, Miss Jennie Masters Tabb. Father Tabb himself is the authority for only one *n*: among the corrections he made of Professor Browne's sketch of his life for the *Library of Southern Literature* occurs the following note, presumably in reply to the question whether one *n* or two *n*'s were correct: "Banister is correct." See also the drawing on page 208.

2. See J. M. Tabb, pp. 4-5; cf. Richmond *Enquirer*, April 25, 1828, for a notice of her death and a brief pedigree of the Peyton family, with whom the Tabbs have constantly intermarried.

3. *National Cyclopedia of American Biography*, XIII, 249-50. A photograph of Father Tabb, with his autograph, accompanies this article.

4. Dr. John R. Archer in 1801 married Frances Cook Tabb, the daughter of John Tabb, of Amelia, who had died in 1798.

5. Information derived from a letter of Dr. Harvie to his sister. See note 11 below.

6. M. S. Pine, p. 13.

7. These are his own words. See also J. M. Tabb, p. 21; and M. S. Pine, p. 20.

8. See also J. M. Tabb, p. 7.

9. Hale, p. 794.

10. *Later Poems*, p. 109. See J. M. Tabb, p. 8. He also paid an affectionate tribute to her, when she died, in the columns of the press:

"Died at 'The Forest,' Amelia County—Jenny Thompson.

To Jenny, whose faithful service to our household ended only with her life.

To her, O Tenderness Divine,

Be Thou, as she to me and mine."

—John B. Tabb (Hale, p. 794).

11. From a letter to his sister, which is now in my possession. Dr. Harvie was a practicing physician of Danville, Virginia.

12. See, for instance, the Dedication to *Lyrics*.

13. The reviewer of *Poems*, writing in the *Nation*, May 23, 1895, p. 402, says: "When we add that no recent poet has written with more longing tenderness of woman's love and with more delicious playful fondness of childhood and infancy, the reader must needs wonder what early joys and sorrows went to the making of the poet."

14. See J. M. Tabb, p. 9. She gives his name as Thomas.

15. Dr. Harvie's letter.

16. J. M. Tabb, pp. 10-11.

17. I met her after the lecture on *Poe, Timrod and Tabb*, delivered by the distinguished literary critic, Mr. Paul Elmer More, in the Percy Turnbull Series of Lectures at the Johns Hopkins University, 1916. She had come from Petersburg to hear the lecture.

18. This detail was furnished by Miss Martha O. Harvie. Professor Browne also speaks of her as Mrs. Judith C. Blair, of Lexington, Va., p. 5163.

19. Compare this passage from a report of operations:

Headquarters, Nottaway Bridge, Va.

May 9, 1864.

I regret that I can only mention Lt. J. W. Hundley, 26th Va., Sergt. D. J. Traynham, Company E, and Private John Y. Tabb, Company B, among those who volunteered with Major Fitzhugh to rescue the bridge while exposed to the fire of the enemy's guns. *The War of Rebellion*; Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Wash., 1880; Series I, Vol. 36, p. 264.

20. For reports bearing his name as Colonel of the Fifty-ninth Virginia Infantry, of which the former tutor Hood became the adjutant, see *The War of Rebellion*, Ser. I, vols. 5, 9, 18, 25, 27, 28, and others.

#### CIVIL WAR EXPERIENCES

21. Major Ficklin was able to do this, because, as I discovered in searching thru Civil War Records, he was in a position of authority. There is an order in the Proceedings of the Advisory Council of the State of Virginia, dated April 17, 1861, which reads as follows: "Ordered, That His Excellency be respectfully advised to organize immediately subsistence and quartermaster's departments, placing at the head of each tem-

porarily one person with the rank of Major, with *authority to employ the necessary clerks and assistants*, and that James R. Crenshaw be recommended to him for the post indicated in the subsistence department, and *B. F. Ficklin for that in the quartermaster's department.*" W. of R., Ser. I, vol. 51, p. 22. He is called Major Ficklin, quartermaster, in a communication from Col. J. A. Early to Col. R. S. Garnett, at Lynchburg, Va., May 16, 1861.

22. *Lyrics*, p. 39; published in *Lippincott's*, July, 1884, vol. 34, p. 74. Confirmation of foregoing details is furnished by a note in Father Tabb's own hand in Father Connor's *Poems*, as follows: "About the middle of August, 1862, I first sighted foreign land. On the deck of "The Kate" lay the victim of yellow fever, just dead. I was then in my seventeenth year, but the verse came only about fifteen years later."

23. This poem was published in *Harper's Monthly*, July, 1877, and reprinted in *Poems* (1882), p. 2, and in *Poems* (1894), p. 10.

24. The International Fair, called also the London Exhibition, was opened on May 1, 1862 (see the *Albion*, May 24, 1862, p. 249), and was scheduled to close on October 15. Had this latter date been kept, Father Tabb would not have seen the Fair, since he could not have been in London until a few days before November 1, allowing his other statements to be correct. But the closing of the Fair was postponed until November 1 (see *Albion*, Oct. 4, p. 475-6, and Nov. 29, p. 573).

25. I have not been able to verify this statement. I have looked carefully thru the *Albion's* notices of the theatres during this period, only to find that Booth was acting in Shakespearean roles but not in King Lear, and that there was a theatre called Laura Kean's. Probably Father Tabb confused the name of the theatre with that of the distinguished interpreter of Lear whom he admired.

26. See *Running the Blockade—at Charleston*, printed in the *Richmond Times*, Feb. 21, 1897, and also in *Southern Historical Papers*, vol. 24, pp. 225-29. See also *Running the Blockade*, by James Sprunt, id. 24, pp. 157-65. The latter says that there were 84 steamers engaged in running from Nassau and other ports to Wilmington and Charleston from November, 1861, to March, 1864.

27. See J. M. Tabb, p. 14.

28. *Lyrics*, p. 43 M. S. Pine attributes the poem to the loss of the *Siren's* anchor (p. 17), but at this time Tabb was not serving on that boat. Cf. J. M. Tabb, p. 16. A note in Father Tabb's own hand reads thus: "In the latter part of March, 1863, this anchor, after holding us in the darkness just under the guns of the blockading fleet was left by our steamer, 'Robert E. Lee,' off the coast of S. Carolina."

29. George P. Kane, Marshal of Police. See W. of R., Ser. I, vol. 2, pp. 577-80; 13-17; 139, 140, and 144.

30. "Cleveland Harbor, Lake Erie, had to be defended against attempts of the prisoners and succor by water from expeditions organized in the friendly and neutral territories of Great Britain and Canada. Major Casey and Captain Tardy were assigned to, and performed, this service, constructing a water battery at the mouth of the harbor, against a force approaching by water, and temporary field forts on Johnson's Island." Report of Engineering Department, Wash., Oct. 30, 1863. W. of R., Ser. III, vol. 5, p. 169.

31. This advances the date of his capture nearly seven months. But Tabb was on the *Siren* when he was captured.

32. *Souvenir Program—Benefit in aid of St. Charles' College, Poli's Auditorium Theatre*, Tuesday, April 28, 1914, pp. 37-57. What I wrote was this: "On his first voyage he saw Wilmington, N. C., and San Salvador, when he had, perhaps, his first poetic inspiration, expressed later in the double quatrain, *Off San Salvador*." I said nothing about "his first voyage to England under that captain in 1862;" nor do I know what is meant by "*that captain*."

33. *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, Dec. 19, 1920, Editorial Section, p. 1.

34. P. 5164.

35. Sprunt, p. 161.

36. *Id.*, p. 159.

37. "Headquarters, Army and District of North Carolina, New Berne, N. C. Nov. 4, 1863. The steamer Robert E. Lee is about leaving Wilmington with mails for General Magruder and funds to pay the troops in Texas." W. of R., Ser. I, vol. 29, p. 416.

38. In a list of blockade runners and others now imprisoned the following occurs: "James H. Britt, of North Carolina, cap-

tured in rebel blockade runner, Robt. E. Lee, Nov. 9, 1863, of which he was steward." W. of R., Ser. 2, vol. 8, p. 407.

39. In a report dated April 28, 1864, is an enclosure containing a list of shipments of cotton, made via Nassau, and the *Siren* is mentioned three times: Dec. 31, 1863—100 bales; Feb. 25, 1864—30 bales; and March 31—35 bales. This seems to contradict the statement of Mr. James (Richmond *Times-Dispatch*) that Tabb was sent in the spring to bring back another ship which had been purchased by the Government, since the *Siren* was in service at least as early as December 31, 1863.

40. See Browne, page 5164.

41. See Moore's poem, *Nea*.

42. See Life of Moore, D. N. B., vol. 38, p. 381. Moore lived in Bermuda from about the end of 1803 until April, 1804.

43. See Browne, p. 5164.

44. See W. of R., Ser. 2, vol. 6, pp. 718, 766 (shortage of blankets, rations, and clothing); Ser. 2, vol. 7, p. 399 (overcrowded condition, June 23, 1864); and Ser. 2, vol. 7, p. 1023 (lack of tents).

45. The following facts are mentioned in a Report of Medical Inspection of Point Lookout, dated July 1, 1864, by Surgeon C. T. Alexander, U. S. A. "The camp is situated on the peninsula formed by the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay. The tents are Sibley and common, old and worn; 16 men to Sibley, 6 to common. The water is bad, and there is much diorrhea, dysentery, and typhoid fever, scurvy, and itch. The mortality is ten per cent." W. of R., Ser. 2, vol. 7, pp. 448-50.

46. See Lanier's novel, *Tiger Lillies*; and Mims, p. 58.

47. It seems that subjects of other nations were not to be imprisoned, for there are definite instructions to release some of the officers and crew of the steamer Pevensey, which was run ashore and destroyed near Beaufort, S. C., while endeavoring to run the blockade—prisoners who had been sent to Point Lookout for imprisonment. "They claimed to be British subjects." . . . Decision: "Bona Fide neutral subjects captured in neutral vessels violating the blockade are not subject to treatment as prisoners of war.—Navy Department, Washington, July 18, 1864." W. of R., Ser. 2, vol. 7, p. 472.

48. See Mims' *Life of Sidney Lanier*, pp. 58-9; J. M. Tabb, pp. 17, 18, 19.



49. See *Poems*, Dedication, stanza 2, and other poems.

50. Miss K. M. Rowland thus quotes Father Tabb as answering a gentleman who asked him about Sidney Lanier: "As to Sidney Lanier, at Point Lookout, I was his fellow-prisoner and can answer your query. There were no concerts in the prison, nor so far as I know was he (Lanier) ever accompanied by another flute. Two of his pieces I can never forget: of one I have never known the name of the composer; the other was the 'Adio' from 'Trovatore,' which Patti herself never gave with more passion. His music was my greatest consolation at the time, and remains among so many painful recollections 'a thing of beauty—a joy forever.'" Quoted from G. W. James, Jr., *Richmond Times-Dispatch*.

51. Major A. G. Brady, Provost Marshal, was in direct charge of the prisoners. W. of R., Ser. 2, vol. 7, p. 1243. Brig.-General James Barnes was in command of the Point. Letter of appointment, W. of R., Ser. 3, vol. 8, p. 435.

52. M. S. Pine says (p. 22): "It was a clear day in February, 1865, when at last John Bannister Tabb and Sidney Lanier stepped forth freemen again into God's sunshine." I can find no confirmation of this statement that both received their freedom on the same day.

53. April 3, 1865.

54. The *Baltimore City Directory* (1868-9) contains this entry: "Roemer, H. B., music teacher, 423 Light."

55. Rev. Dr. Kinsolving, the present rector, is authority for the statement that Dr. Milo Mahan was the rector from 1864-70 and one of the most prominent men in the Episcopal Church at that time. See also Dr. Mahan's parochial reports, Annual Diocesan Convention of Maryland, 1868 and 1869.

56. *Later Lyrics*, p. 69. See M. S. Pine, pp. 121-2, who gives the same explanation.

#### CONVERSION TO CATHOLICISM

57. M. S. Pine makes two contradictory assertions about this. "A position was offered him in a school attached to Mt. Calvary Episcopal Church" (p. 22). "While teaching at Saint Paul's School, Baltimore, in 1868, young Tabb became seriously ill of typhoid fever" (p. 121). The latter is correct. But the date of his illness is two years earlier, unless she refers to his second illness in Baltimore; that, however, occurred in the autumn of 1869. (Cf. Hale, p. 795.)

58. Annual Diocesan Convention of Maryland, Journals for 1867, 68, 69.

59. Annual Diocesan Convention of Maryland, Journal for 1868. Address of the Bishop, May 27, 1868, p. 31.

60. Annual Diocesan Convention of Maryland, Journal of 1869. Address of the Bishop, May 26, 1869, p. 35. J. M. Tabb, p. 23.

61. According to Rev. A. Piper, St. John's Chapel, Racine, Wis., who wrote to me March 8, 1921, as follows: "I am now in my sixty-first year of residence in this school. Mr. Tabb was a teacher in this school for so short a time that his name did not even get into the catalogue. He was here in the year 1870. I recollect how Mr. Tabb looked and that he was a pleasant fellow."

62. Hale, p. 795; Chadwick, p. 227.

63. P. 23.

64. P. 59.

65. P. 65.

66. M. S. Pine, p. 23.

67. *Life and Characteristics of Rt. Rev. Alfred A. Curtis*, compiled by the Sisters of the Visitation, Wilmington, Del. P. J. Kenedy & Sons, New York.

68. Entrance Registry, St. Mary's Seminary. J. M. Tabb, p. 25. The biography of Bishop Curtis, mentioned above, erroneously states that Father Tabb had entered the church six months before Curtis. (p. 66.)

69. Chadwick, p. 227.

70. Rev. C. D. Hogue.

71. Entrance Registry.

72. Catalogue of St. Charles' College.

73. Hale, p. 797.

74. His aversion to mathematics is well known, altho it is somewhat exaggerated.

75. Entrance Registry; Hale, p. 796.

76. Entrance Registry.

77. His name appears in the catalogs for 1878-1881, among the faculty.

78. This answers the question put by Dr. Mather, who doubtlessly speaks the mind of many others, in the *Nation*, Dec. 2, 1909: "Whether this twelve years' delay (1872-1884) implies a mental hesitation, or mere inertia, whether one may link with it

the more lyrical poems of unrequiting love that appear in his first volume, we perhaps have no right to ask."

79. Rev. D. O. Crowley and others.

80. P. 38.

#### THE PRIEST.

81. See *The Sulpicians in the United States*, by Charles G. Hebermann. The Encyclopedia Press, New York, 1916.

82. Professor Basil Gildersleeve and Rev. Michael F. Dinneen, vice-president of St. Mary's Seminary and a friend of Father Tabb's from his teaching days in Richmond, both sponsor the story.

83. These books were given to Father Gonzalo A. Noell, of Havana, Cuba, on July 1, 1909. Father Noell later presented them to a classmate from Baltimore, Mr. J. Earl Baumgartner, who allowed me to use them.

#### THE TEACHER.

84. *Bone Rules*, p. 37.

85. Id., p. 45.

86. Id., p. 57.

87. Id., pp. 90-104, 126.

88. Id., p. 126.

89. Id., p. 97.

90. Id., p. 43.

91. From my own scrap book.

92. See *America*, Feb. 5, 12, 19, 1910.

93. See letter to Professor Browne, p. 106.

94. Cf. *America*.

95. See J. M. Tabb, p. 28.

96. Hale, p. 796.

#### THE FRIEND.

97. See *Quips and Quiddits*.

98. See Mims, pp. 58-59.

99. Id., p. 59.

100. J. M. Tabb, p. 66.

101. Ibid.

102. See p. 56.

103. First published by J. M. Tabb, p. 71, whose version is slightly different from this.

104. See p. 57.
105. For a more detailed biography, see Professor James W. Bright, Johns Hopkins University *Circular*, Feb., 1913, pp. 3-18.
106. Id.
107. Father Dyer's Tabbiana.
108. See J. M. Tabb, pp. 53-57.
109. See p. 65.
110. The following names are recorded:  
 Pars Autumnalis—Tabb Bros. & Co.; W. H. B. (Sept. 8); Romulo (Sept. 17); Joe, 1875 (Sept. 18); John B. O'Reilly (Sept. 24); Dan A. Driscoll (Sept. 7); Miss Emily (Oct. 15); Francis J. Hurney (Oct. 20); Carroll, '02 (Oct. 22); J. F. Gibson (Oct. 6); Barry J. Colding (Nov. 13); Harry Walsh (Nov. 23); Thomas E. McGuigan; Mr. De La Warr Easter.  
 Pars Hiemalis—J. W. Norris; P. A. Gribbon; E. M. Gleeson; P. J. V. Govigan (Dec. 1); Tom (Dec. 16); Dick (Jan. 14); R. E. B. (Feb. 2); Leo (March 4).  
 Pars Verna—Will; Jimmie (March 15); Aunt Judith; James C. McMahon; Charles B. Carroll (Feb. 23); I. B. Menu (March 10); Joseph M. Moran; Eugene (May 2); Paul (May 7); William W. McEvilla.  
 Pars Aestiva—Edward J. Hackett; Thomas V. Murto, '06 (June 9); Joseph S. Gagon (June 12); Edward C. Mylott (July 25); Edward, 1882 (Aug. 5); Francis (Aug. 5); J. D. S., '73 (Aug. 11); Mrs. Hambleton (Aug. 24); J. Tabb Heywood (Aug. 31).

#### THE MAN

111. See J. M. Tabb, p. 47.
112. *Sleeplessness*, L. L., p. 16. See the sonnet, *The Agony*, P., p. 161.
113. *To a Star*, L. L., p. 30.
114. L., p. 24.
115. See bibliography under Jacobi.
116. Cited from a personal letter.
117. See also J. M. Tabb, p. 56.
118. In a letter to M. S. Pine (p. 123) he says: "The older I grow, the more am I impressed by the wonderful 'Ancient Mariner.'"
  119. See J. M. Tabb, p. 127.
  120. Baltimore Sunday Sun, September 17, 1922.

121. See *Bookman*, Jan., 1899, p. 403. The *Bookman* (Feb., 1899, p. 507) declared that the author of these lines was Mr. Andrew Lang, and printed the *Reply to Mr. Austin Dobson*.
122. March, 1899, p. 218.
123. Father Dyer's Tabbiana.
124. Id.
125. See the faulty reading of J. M. Tabb, p. 38.
126. April 23, 1909.
127. See J. M. Tabb, pp. 46-47.
128. See M. S. Pine, p. 124.
129. Father Dyer's Tabiana.
130. See J. M. Tabb, pp. 51-52.
131. J. M. Tabb declares (p. 21) that Father Tabb "never could be induced to go north of Mason and Dixon's Line." But he crossed the line at least once, when he went to Racine, Wis.
132. The Baltimore Morning *Sun*.
133. M. S. Pine, p. 34.

#### THE AUTHOR

134. The Tabb Album.
135. See M. S. Pine, p. 21; and J. M. Tabb, p. 91.
136. See Appendix, p. 203.
137. The sonnets to *Keats* and *Shelley* belong to 1880; *The Dews* to 1881; *Unuttered* to 1883; *The Half-Ring Moon* to 1884; *Milton* to 1885; *Kildee* to 1886; *The Plaint of the Rose* to 1889; *Intimations* to 1891; *The White Jessamine* to 1892; *The Mocking Bird* to 1893; *Limitations* to 1894; *The Young Tenor* to 1896; *Moon-Flowers* to 1898; *Meadow Frogs* to 1899; *The Whip-poor-will* to 1901; *My Captive* to 1902; *A Wind-Call* to 1904; *Inscriptions* to 1906; *The Cliff* to 1907; *Going Blind* to 1909.
138. See his letter in the *Bookman*, March, 1899, p. 18.
139. Strange as it may seem, only one of these poems, *Foot-Soldiers*, has an appeal to children. I cannot help making the comment that Father Tabb's poems, like the advertisements of the *Youth's Companion*, were not intended for children.
140. *The Vampire Moon*, Feb., 1910, p. 368.
141. The book was printed, according to reliable testimony, at the St. Mary's Industrial School Press, Baltimore.
142. Pattee gives this date without rime or reason.
143. *Camb. Hist. Amer. Lit.*, vol. 2, p. 329; *Jenkins' Handbook of English Literature* (rev.), p. 576; *International Encyclopedia*, vol. 21, p. 780.

144. M. S. Pine, p. 45; *Encyclopedia Americana*, vol. 26, p. 197.
145. Among these were *Unuttered*, *Mistletoe*, *The Half-Ring Moon*, and *Off San Salvador*.
146. Vol. 2, p. 329.
147. Cf. Bibliography—More.
148. Dec. 25, 1897, p. 400.
149. *National Cyclopedia of American Biography*, vol. 13, p. 250.
150. "The first edition of 500 copies was exhausted in three days." *Bookman*, Feb., 1895, vol. 1, p. 8.
151. *The Spectator*, Feb. 23, 1895, pp. 260-261.
152. May 23, 1895, p. 402.
153. M. A. De Wolfe Howe, Jr., March, 1895, p. 413.
154. See also *The Academy*, July 6, 1895, p. 8; *The Dial*, Sept. 1, 1895, p. 118, and *The Sewanee Review*, vol. 3, p. 431ff.
155. May 8, 1897, pp. 129-30.
156. Sept. 4, 1897, p. 127.
157. Dec. 16, 1897.
158. See also *The Book News*, June, 1897, p. 506; *The Dial*, Sept. 1, 1895, p. 118.
159. Dec. 30, 1899, p. 1029.
160. Dec. 14, 1898.
161. Jan. 25, 1900, pp. 258-9.
162. See also *The Critic*, April, 1900, p. 376; *The Dial*, Dec. 16, 1899, p. 501.
163. *Lib. So. Lit.*, p. 5176.
165. Jan., 1903, p. 344 and p. 413.
164. I recently acquired the copyright and all publishing rights in America of this volume from Dodd, Mead & Company.
166. April, 1903, p. 384.
167. See also *The Academy*, Jan. 17, 1903, p. 49; *The Dial*, July 16, 1903, p. 38.
168. *Academy*, Nov. 17, 1906, p. 498.
169. March 16, 1907, p. 319; also Oct. 22, 1910, p. 486.
170. Reprinted in *The Living Age*, Nov. 9, 1907, pp. 372-5. *London Times*, Oct. 4, 1907, p. 297.
171. Other reviews: *The Spectator*, Feb. 2, 1907, p. 179; *The Nation*, July 11, 1907, p. 35; *Atlantic Monthly*, Dec., 1907, p. 846; *New York Times*, Aug. 10, 1907, p. 85.
172. Pp. 22 and 52.



173. The collection of cartoons in the possession of the Rev. E. R. Dyer is proof of this. None of his sketches has been published except that of himself.

174. Jan., 1908, p. 412.

175. Feb., 1911, p. 419.

176. *Child Verse*.

177. See other letters to Professor Browne.

178. Written on the manuscript of the poem *Hazard* (L., p. 6) is the following characteristically humorous note: "Dear Doctor (Browne): For turkey in *me* I have often made thanksgiving; but for myself in *turkey* (not to mention the gilt) I know not yet whether I shall blush or exult. However luxurious the Album, believe me, to be bound in your affections is by far the higher boast of your friend, J. B. T."

179. P. 35.

180. I have recently seen two meditations, very short, which exhibited a mastery of satire and irony. One is a *Meditation on the Good Samaritan*; the other, a *Meditation on the Death of the President*, by Bishop Ireland.

181. J. M. Tabb, pp. 29-30. Following the suggestion of a member of the faculty, he added the phrase, "In whatever mood they may be."

182. Pp. 90-104, 126.

183. Pp. 15, 24, 37-41, 59-63, 70-89, 116-25, 135-51.

184. Under the title *The Ambush* this poem is the last in *Quips and Quiddits*.

185. Aug. 4, 1898, p. 349.

186. This was corrected in the second edition.

187. Pp. 146-51.

#### RELIGION AND POETRY

188. P. 254.

189. THE ROSARY IN RHYME:

The Annunciation

The Visitation

The Nativity

The Presentation

The Child in the Temple

The Agony

The Crown of Thorns

The Scourging

Carrying the Cross

The Crucifixion

The Resurrection

The Ascension

Pentecost

The Assumption

The Coronation

#### AN OCTAVE TO MARY

Mary

Annunciation

Mary, the Sinner

Christ, the Mendicant



Child and Mother  
The Debtor Christ  
A Pair of Turtle Doves  
(The Tree)

## GOD

God's Likeness, L. 130  
God, L. 127

## BIBLICAL

Bethel, L. L. 108  
Golgotha, P. 171  
The Good Thief, L. P. 13  
On Calvary, L. 121  
Kedron, L. 182

## CHRIST

Christ and the Pagan, L. P. 11  
Christ and the Winds, L. P. 26  
Christ and the Dumb Creatures, L. P. 14  
Christ to the Victim Tree, P. 98  
To the Christ, P. 89  
Son of Mary, P. 97  
Christ Child to the Christmas Lamb, L. L. 112  
Incarnation, P. 92  
The Child on Calvary, C. V. 74  
The Child at Bethlehem, C. V. 67-68  
The Child at Nazareth, C. V. 75  
The Lamb Child, C. V. 70—  
L. 117  
My Mediator, L. 131

## BLESSED VIRGIN

The Annunciation, P. 91  
Immaculate Conception, P. 9  
Stabat, L. L. 117

## SAINTS

St. Afra to the Flames, L. L. 126  
Brother Ass and St. Francis,  
L. P. 29-30  
Magdalen, P. 94

St. Mary of Egypt, L. L. 128  
St. Theresa and the Child,  
C. V. 77

## LITURGICAL SEASONS

*Christmas*

The Burthen of the Ass, L. L. 114  
The Babe to the Gift-Bearers,  
L. P. 20.  
The Light of Bethlehem, P. 79  
The Christmas Babe, P. 78  
The Christmas Cradle, L. L. 111  
Christmas, L. P. 19  
At the Manger, L. P. 24  
The Angel's Christmas Quest,  
L. 118  
Christmas, L. 116  
Gloria in Excelsis, L. 120  
Epiphany, L. P. 25

*Lent*

A Lenten Thought, P. 100  
The Vigil of Good Friday,  
L. L. 118  
Holy Saturday, L. L. 118  
Holy Saturday, L. P. 28

*Easter*

Easter Lambs, L. L. 119  
The Paschal Moon, P. 170  
Rabboni, P. 88  
Easter Eve, L. 124  
Easter Flowers, L. 126  
Easter Morning, L. 125

*Miscellaneous*

In Aeternum, L. P. 42  
The Boy Bishop, L. L. 123  
Faith, L. L. 100  
Quo Vadis, L. P. 52-3  
Unigenitus, L. P. 68  
Conscience, L. L. 101  
Holy Ground, P. 102  
The Soul's Quest, L. P. 90  
In Tenebris, L. P. 111  
Purgatory, L. 138

190. When this was first published (1882, p. 108), it had, strange to say, fifteen, instead of the usual fourteen, verses. The last lines then read as follows:

“And thus, through all earth’s changes manifold,  
Where death and silence strive for mastery,  
Still throb prophetic melodies of old,  
Encompassing the burthen of thy lay.”

## 191. THE NEW TESTAMENT

Abashed .....	L. P. 18, Matt. xxvi, 64-75
Adieu .....	L. L. 773, Luke xvi, 26-31
Bethlehem, The Breeze at.....	L. P. 22, Matt. viii, 26
Bethlehem, Light of.....	P. 79, Luke ii, 8-11
Betrayal .....	L. L. 47, Matt. xxvi, 48
Blessing, The Old Year’s.....	L. P. 88, Luke ii, 25-31
Blind, Going .....	L. P. 107, John iii, 3-5
Consolation .....	L. P. 67, Luke xxiii, 26
Cradle, Christmas .....	L. L. 111, Luke ii, 6-7
Daybreak .....	L. L. 48, John xv, 13
Dayspring .....	P. 39, John xix, 34
Difference, The .....	L. L. 138, Matt. xviii, 21-22
Echo .....	L. 3, Luke xv, 11-32
Expected of Nations, The.....	L. L. 110, Luke ii, 8-11
Flowers, Easter .....	L. 126, Matt. xxviii, 2-7
Flute, Lanier’s .....	L. 165, John v, 4
Householders, The .....	L. L. 104, Matt. viii, 32
Insomnia .....	L. 24, Luke xxii, 39-46
Lambs, Easter .....	L. L. 11, Matt. ii, 16-18
Lillies, Two Easter.....	L. P. 98, John xii, 3, and xxi, 1 Num. xvii, 8
Mistletoe .....	P. 81, Luke ii, 16-18
Morning, Easter .....	L. 125, Luke vii, 37-50
Nature .....	L. P. 31, Luke viii, 43-46
Neighbors .....	L. P. 94, Luke x, 33-35
Nest, In Thy.....	L. L. 98, Matt. xxiii, 37
Offering, My .....	L. L. 100, Matt. vii, 9-10
Opportunity .....	L. 144, John v, 2-5
Pachomias, St. ....	Unp., Matt xv, 17-19
Periwinkle .....	L. L. 87, John xx, 1-2
Principio, Sicut in.....	L. P. 63, John xx, 34, Acts ii, 2
Ramah, Life’s .....	L. L. 18, Matt. ii, 16-18
Seed, Good .....	L. L. 111, Matt. ii, 2
Sisters, The .....	L. 17, Luke x 38-42
Smiter, The .....	L. P. 115, Luke xxii, 64
Stabat .....	L. L. 117, Matt. xxvii, 46
Suppliant, The .....	L. 30, Luke xvi, 19-31
Tollmen, The .....	L. 19, Matt. xvii, 23-26
Tribute, Earth’s .....	P. 86, Luke xx, 25
Underground, From the.....	L. 99, Matt. ii, 1-2

Violet B., To.....L. L. 59, John xv, 13  
Wanderer, The .....L. L. 161, Matt. xviii, 12-13  
Wheatfield, To the.....L. P. 59, Luke xi, 3

## THE OLD TESTAMENT

Beatitude ..... L. P. 35, Gen. ii, 9, 16-17, 111  
 Benighted ..... L. P. 113, Gen. xxi, 9-16  
 Birthday, The ..... L. P. 62, Gen. i, 12; iii, 8  
 Blind ..... L. P. 108, Ex. xiii, 21-22  
 Billows ..... L. 57, Gen. xxi, 14  
 Cliffs ..... L. P. 58, III Kings vi, 23-27  
 Columbus, Christopher ..... L. 38, Gen. viii, 8-11  
 Conqueror, The ..... L. L. 64, Deut. xiv, 22  
 Conscience ..... L. L. 101, Gen. xxxvii, 27  
 David and Goliath ..... L. L. 113, I Kings, xvii  
 Dawn ..... L. 2, Ex. xxix, 7, 10, 16,  
     Lev. i, 3-5  
 Dial, The ..... L. P. 100, Dan. v, 26-28  
 Fig Tree, The ..... L. 173, Gen. iii, 7  
 Immortelles ..... L. 106, Matt. vi, 28  
 Life Giver, The ..... L. P. 83, Gen. xxviii, 12  
 Memory ..... L. P. 64, Ex. xvi, 13-23  
 Midnight ..... L. 23, Ex. x, 23  
 Moments ..... L. P. 16, Ex. xvi, 13-23  
 Renewal ..... L. 23, Ex. x, 23  
 Restraint ..... L. 119, Gen. iii, 2-6  
 Snowdrop, The ..... L. 100, Gen. ii, 21-22  
 Sunset, A ..... L. L. 55, Dan. v, 5-25, 28  
 Sunset, Christmas Eve ..... L. L. 109, Gen. iii, 23-24  
 Twilight ..... L. L. 127, Ruth ii, 7-17  
 Wind-Call, A ..... L. P. 69, Ex. i, 14  
 Stilling the Tempest ..... L. L. 136, John xii, 3  
     Matt. viii, 26  
 Potter's Field ..... L. L. 138, Matt. xxvii, 7  
     Matt. viii, 20  
 193.  
 Leaves ..... L. P. 50, Sin and its punishment  
 Departed, The ..... L. 70, Communion of Saints  
     Mark xv, 10; Cor. xii  
 Mediator, My ..... L. 131, Love of neighbor  
     Mark xii, 31  
 Charity ..... L. 133, Almsgiving, Luke xvi, 21  
 Sea and Land, On ..... L. 135, Confession  
 Silence ..... P. 155, Silence in church  
 Marsh ..... L. 78, Holy Communion  
 194.  
 Chord, The ..... P. 40, Cloistered sisterhoods  
 Blindness, In ..... L. P. 110, A Nun receiving the  
     veil  
 Dust to Dust ..... L. L. 45, Prayer of Ash Wednes-  
     day

195. L. L., pp. 124-5; P., (1882), p. 37; L. P., pp. 80-81.  
 196. L. P., pp. 29-30. See *St. Francis of Assisi*, by Johannes Jorgensen, p. 148.  
 197. P., p. 98.  
 198. L. P., pp. 11-12.  
 199. The following is a list of poems belonging to this group:  
 Babe to the Gift-Bearers, The, Moon, Paschal, P. 170  
     L. P. 20                      Neighbour, My, L. P. 36  
 Bestias, Ad, L. P. 15              Phantoms, P. 12  
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 Life-Tide, The, L. 61              Saturday, Holy, L. P. 28  
 Manger, At the, L. P. 24              Stabat Mater, L. 123  
 Marsh, The, L. 78                  Unigenitus, L. P. 68  
 200. Pp. 41-42.  
 201. See the criticism of this poem in the *Athenaeum*, March 16, 1907, and in the *Spectator*, Feb. 2, 1907.  
 202. See also *A Corymbus for Autumn*, stanza v.  
 203. Essay on *Crashaw*. See *A Renegade Poet and Other Essays*, with introduction by Edward J. O'Brien, p. 130. Boston, 1910.

#### FAVORITE POETS AND THEIR INFLUENCE

204. See Mims, p. 294; and *National Cyclopedia of American Biography*, under Tabb.  
 205. Rev. Daniel J. Connor—*Catholic World*, May, 1922.  
 206. Ibid.  
 207. Poems (1882).  
 208. See Appendix, p. 225.  
 209. *List of the First Thousand Works of the Keats-Shelley Memorial Library at Rome*. Macmillan & Co., 1910.  
 210. See Preface (pp. xix), *A Concordance to the Poems of John Keats*, Carnegie Institute, Washington, D. C., 1917.

#### A TRUE LYRIC POET

211. Compare this with Aldrich's similar wish:  
     I would be the Lyric  
     Ever on the lip,  
     Rather than the epic  
     Memory lets slip.

- 212. Mather, p. 534.
  - 213. Id., p. 536.
  - 214. *Catholic World*, p. 579.
  - 215. Mather, p. 535.
  - 216. *Catholic World*, May, 1922.
  - 217. The London *Times*. Reprint in *Living Age*, Nov. 9, 1907.
  - 218. See Shuster, pp. 307-8.
  - 219. This movement has been ably studied by George N. Shuster in his book *Catholic Spirit in Modern English Literature*, 1922, Macmillan, New York.
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